



SUPER / E2

In Istanbul, Ruffa
hops from Asia to
Europe every day

Top PNP post a toss-up between Calderon, Razon

By Luigi A. del Puerto

A TOSS-UP BETWEEN DEPUTY CHIEFS OSCAR Calderon and Avelino Razon Jr. is how outgoing police chief Director General Arturo Lomibao sees the outcome of the contest for the top police post which he is set to vacate next month.

But that assumes that the term of Lomibao, who will reach the retirement age of 56 on July 5, is not

BUSINESS / B1

BPI forms banking
subsidiary for OFWs, offers
24/7 investment counseling

METRO / A19

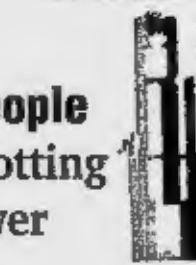
P19-M misdeclared
ukay-ukay frozen pork cuts
and woven fabrics seized

WORLD / A21

FBI arrests 7 people
suspected of plotting
to hit Sears Tower

**PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER**
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Now, it's Gloria vs thinking class

By Philip C. Tubeza,
Christian V. Esguerra
and Armand N. NocumIT'S THE THINKING CLASS
vs GMA.

Many among the country's intellectual and literary class would want President

NOW, IT'S A4

GMA in charge: 'I'm fine'

San Beda law school drops 26 top profs

By Christian V. Esguerra

ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S PRESTIGIOUS law schools has lost 26 of its top professors over a row with the dean who decided to keep three senior students who had failed twice in two subjects.

These professors—three of them regional trial court judges—were not re-hired this semester. They were signatories in a petition seeking the resignation of Virgilio Jara, dean of the 58-year-old San Beda Law School.

Many of them had been teaching in the school for at least 10 years until they were shown the door, according to Sixto Brillantes, president of the law school's alumni association and a member of the teaching force since 1966.

"These are no ordinary teachers—they're veterans and good at what they are doing," he told the *Inquirer* in an interview Wednesday. "Besides, what wrong have they done to lose their teaching posts?"

Rocky Delson, the prefect of students, yesterday admitted that the 26 teachers were not re-hired in connection with their demand for the dean's resignation.

"They signed the letter demanding Jara's resignation," he told the *Inquirer*, explaining that the dean had the right to "demand respect" from the faculty. "So he said, 'perhaps it's better that these professors don't teach

SAN BEDA/A8



THE PATIENT seems impatient to get back to work. President Arroyo looking well and cheery in her suite at the St. Luke's Hospital has her laptop good and ready and meets her chief of staff Mike Defensor and Presidential Management Staff chief Arthur Yap. MALACANANG PHOTO

Infection blamed on killer work schedule

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.
and Christine Avendaño

CABINET OFFICIALS ARE HOPING that President Macapagal-Arroyo's hospital confinement would convince their workaholic boss—who also has a hearty appetite for food—to finally slow down before her killer schedule gets her, and more of her top advisers.

So punishing has been Ms Arroyo's working hours that two of

her previous executive secretaries and a chief of staff ended up having to undergo heart operations.

"I hope this incident will make her realize that any machine that is overworked can have a breakdown," Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez told the *Inquirer*.

Ms Arroyo was diagnosed with acute infectious diarrhea apparently caused by work-related stress.

"I already told her months ago that we, she in particular, have to slow down," said Presidential

Chief of Staff Michael Defensor, who was chosen to air the complaints of his Cabinet peers who could not keep up with the President's hectic work day.

But Ms Arroyo did not heed Defensor's request.

"She continued to work from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. on the average. Even upon the insistence of the core group that drafts her schedule, she overrules us and continues to add more to her schedule," said Defensor.

Gonzalez said that most Cabinet sessions would last seven hours.

"The President controls the meeting, she is never a passive participant," Gonzalez said.

But Ms Arroyo was also said to bring paper work right to the presidential suite.

Ms Arroyo's style of working, which is characterized by attention to details, has left her Cabinet secretaries gasping for breath or with little time for sleep.

INFECTION/A6

North Cotabato and a close ally of the governor; Kamlon Ampatuan; Cajelo Datumanong, a nephew of Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Darumanong; an unidentified bodyguard, and the three-year-old girl, who was on the roadside when the bomb went off. Another male victim, also a relative of Ampatuan, later died at the hospital.

"It was a well planned attack, but it failed to hit its target," Guniting said.

Investigators who rushed to the scene said the bomb was fashioned out of four mortar shells which were hidden in the van and detonated as Ampatuan's convoy was passing the market.

Col. Franklin del Prado, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said samples collected from the blast site were consistent with the components of an 81-millimeter mortar shell. He did not elaborate.

BOMB/A8

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GMA IN CHARGE/A6

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon including Aurora Province, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rain-showers and thunderstorms. Rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rain-showers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO FOR RESEARCH/06/23/06

SOURCE: PAGASA

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: Inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2006

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Batangas	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Lanao	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Taytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zambanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Bogeyan da Ori	Cloudy with Rains
Cagayan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

'You can't kill an insurgency'

By Luigi del Puerto

GOVERNMENT FORCES MAY SUCCEED IN killing every last rebel in the country but the insurgency will not go away that easily, a top police official said yesterday.

"You can kill all the insurgents, but you cannot kill the insurgency," said the Philippine National Police official who did not want to be named for fear of antagonizing his military colleagues.

"It's an aggressive stance, it's a macho stance... it's like killing all criminal elements, but there will be another set of criminals after," said the police official whose views echoed an assessment made earlier by Police Director General Vidal Querol, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's recent order to the Armed Forces to wipe out the communist insurgency in two years has become a source of unspoken rivalry between the military and the police organizations.

Anti-insurgency is traditionally the job of the PNP as the civilian agency in charge of internal security. The AFP's job is to defend the country from external attack.

Various police officials and Interior Secretary Ronald Puno have urged Malacañang to give the PNP an equal role with the AFP in the new aggressive anti-insurgency campaign which comes with a P1-billion budget.

Querol and the unnamed PNP official provide a glimpse into how the police organization views the government's renewed all-out drive against the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army.

Querol said military operations solve only one aspect of a multi-faceted problem. After the rebels are driven out, government must

usher in economic development, he said.

Otherwise, the insurgency will resurface "like a virus" needing a more potent cure, Querol said.

"If you take out the armed component and the government does nothing to improve livelihood, at the end of the day people are still poor. If your stomach rumbles, then your mind succumbs... to propaganda," he said.

The unnamed PNP official said the key to solving the rebellion is to allow the same opportunities in urban centers to trickle down to the countryside.

He noted that the NPA has been effective in exploiting the "inability of government to deliver services in remote areas" where job opportunities are scarce and the rebellion offers an alternative way of life.

Querol said the government was on the right track with the renewed anti-insurgency campaign. Any money that would aid the military and police in fighting rebels is very much welcome, he said.

But to strike at the root of the problem is to "liberate ordinary people from the clutches of poverty," he said.

But the unnamed police official warned that "a lot of people would just die" if government moves against the rebels without getting the support of the people.

The battle against the communists must be waged in the context of a "just war," and government must occupy the "moral high ground" at all times, he said.

This means banishing the con-

cept of "collateral damage" from the vocabulary of officers dealing with military campaigns.

"There must be no unnecessary victims... If a non-combatant father dies even [in a] legitimate military operation, the pain remains and the sense of deprivation is there," he said, adding that the surviving kin now become vulnerable to recruitment.

The Commission on Human Rights yesterday said the billion-peso budget for final push against the communist insurgency would be better spent developing far-flung barangays, not on guns and attack helicopters.

People side with the New People's Army because government has done nothing about their plight," said Dominador Calamba II, CHR officer in charge.

"The NPAs lend them money, give them fertilizers, help them in their livelihood," he said.

Calamba said it was the government's right and obligation to fight the insurgency and protect the state.

"But the fight should not be tarred by human rights violations... the innocent are protected," he said.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz yesterday announced the government will provide P1.5 billion for on-base housing for soldiers.

The amount, to come from the earnings of the Malampaya natural gas project, will be deposited "in the next few days" in the modernization trust fund of the AFP, Cruz announced at the 108th anniversary celebrations of the Philippine Navy.

He said the money will be used to build some 3,000 housing units. The lack of military housing has been an issue in several coup attempts.

With reports from Norman Bordadora and Fe B. Zamora



REP. SATUR OCAMPO and wife Carolina Malay at airport immigration window.

JESS YUSON

Satur leaves after airport flap

By Nikko Dizon

AFTER MANY FRUSTRATING

moments at the airport when he believed government rancor would force him to miss his flight, Bayan Muna partylist Rep. Satur Ocampo was able to take a Lufthansa plane for Geneva three minutes before take-off last night.

He wife, Carolina Malay, were the last passengers to climb on board.

Ocampo was all ready to leave for a week-long trip for a session of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva but was held at the Bureau of Immigration at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on a hold departure order.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez had issued the order, which immigration received last Thursday citing the rebellion case

against Ocampo stemming from the foiled coup attempt last February.

Ocampo was held at the Naia despite his protestations that a court order issued by Regional Trial Court (RTC) Judge Reinto Quiñal last June 20 allowed him to travel to Geneva and thereafter to Belgium for a meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and frenzied telephone calls to Gonzalez and Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez.

It took a call to Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor before Ocampo was finally allowed to leave.

"We called up Mike Defensor and told him that we will be forced to call the UN and the IPU about the violation of the human rights of Satur Ocampo," Neri Colmenares, Ocampo's lawyer, said.

He said that Ocampo also spoke with Gonzalez on a mobile phone, assuring him he would return to the country.

Colmenares said that Gonzalez told Ocampo not to speak against the Philippines while in Geneva.

"Ka Satur told him that he would never speak against the country but speaking against the government if there are violations is another matter," Colmenares said.

Gonzalez also asked Ocampo to issue a statement to the BI that he would return to the country on June 30, the lawyer said, adding that Ocampo would no longer go to Brussels, Belgium.

Prior to checking in for his flight, Ocampo told reporters that Gonzalez's issuance of a hold departure already consisted a "personal persecution."

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Old budget gives GMA blank check—Drilon

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SENATE PRESIDENT FRANKLIN DRILON has conceded that the failure of Congress to approve the 2006 national budget has given President Macapagal-Arroyo a blank check to spend public money according to her wishes.

Drilon was reacting to news reports that the President can realign at least P48 billion worth of pork barrel funds under the reenacted P907.56 billion due to Congress' failure to approve the P1.05 trillion national budget for this year.

"This is precisely the difficulty of having a reenacted budget. There is so much discretion given to the President," Drilon said.

Drilon said Congress, which supposedly had the "power over the purse" under the Constitution, can only hope that the Commission on Audit will make sure the realigned funds are properly spent.

"We are already in the middle of the year. By constitutional mandate, the President is supposed to submit the budget for 2007 between July 24 and Aug. 24. We start working to

that when we come back. There is no more sense in having the budget for 2006. We have only five months to go for the year," Drilon said.

The committee deliberations ended in a deadlock when Congress adjourned on June 8.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan said he was still hoping Malacañang and the Senate could reach a middle ground in the budget stalemate.

The Senate cut the Malacañang budget approved by the House by P64 billion, mostly funds deemed as pork barrel for the President. Ms Arroyo took an all-or-nothing stance, forcing a deadlock.

"We're still hoping the executive department will have a change of heart so that we can find a middle ground. The Senate has always been open to the realignment of some of the budget cuts. But if the Palace will stick to its position—take it or leave it—we cannot have a breakthrough," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan said the Senate would exercise its oversight functions to monitor the disbursement of the funds that the President realigned to

projects other than that provided for under the budget act.

Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus, chair of the House committee on ways and means, expressed confidence in Ms Arroyo's disbursement of funds.

"The President has already shown sound discretion in allotting enough funds for government's priorities like counter-insurgency and anti-graft and corruption drives," he said. These programs had been hobbled by lack of funds, he said.

Lapus expressed confidence that the President could manage properly a reenacted budget that reportedly would give her full discretion on how to spend P21 billion in non-repeating projects and P27.7 billion in interest savings from the 2005 budget deficit.

"The President knows government would be shortchanging our people if the funds which we have raised from new taxes and prudent fund management of the Department of Budget and Management will not be used this year for basic services such as health, education, food security and infrastructure," said Lapus.

This amount is significant because no other government agency has performed as prudently. This is

House posts P190-M savings

By Philip C. Tuba

FOLLOWING AUSTERITY AND cost-cutting measures, the House of Representatives posted an unprecedented P190 million in savings last year. Speaker Jose de Venecia said yesterday.

De Venecia said the savings came after President Macapagal-Arroyo urged all government agencies to implement austerity measures due to the huge budget deficit.

He added that this was the second time that the House successfully reduced costs "to set an example for other government agencies" and the amount was also higher than the P66 million savings it posted in 2004.

This amount is significant because no other government agency has performed as prudently. This is

our collective response to the President's repeated appeals for fiscal discipline," de Venecia said.

He added that the House realized the savings "through a program of austerity, cost-cutting and disciplined financial management."

During a meeting in Malacañang on Thursday, the President warmly congratulated De Venecia and the entire House and its leadership for the savings.

House computerization

De Venecia was accompanied by Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, chair of the House committee on appropriations; Deputy Minority Leader Agapito "Butz" Aquino, and Secretary General Roberto Nazareno.

De Venecia told Ms Arroyo the House would allocate P100 million of the savings for the construction

of a new building in the Batasan Complex to accommodate the expanded membership of the lower chamber and their support staff.

He said the rest of the savings would be used to finance the full computerization of House operations under his overall program to modernize the legislature and bring it to the digital age.

De Venecia credited former Budget Secretary Romulo Neri, now director-general for economic planning, and former House Appropriations Committee Chair Rolando Andaya Jr., now Budget Secretary, with the House's prudent spending.

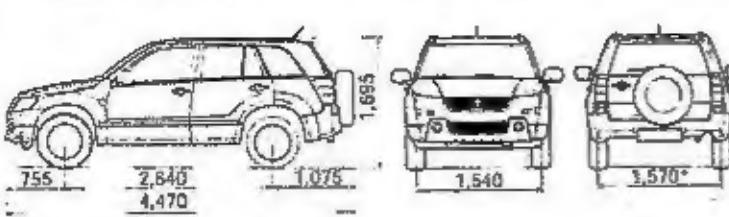
He said the House computerization program as planned would cover all House members and include a digital link to the plenary hall and their congressional districts.

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GMA didn't have a bite at Osteria 88

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO didn't touch her food in the tony Franco-Italian restaurant owned by a nephew of Interior and Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno where she was taken ill Thursday night.

Osteria 88 executive chef Rae Pedrosa said he personally served the President's food and she did not touch it—not the pan seared goose liver nor the caesar's salad. (Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor claimed the President had salad at the restaurant before she complained of stomach pains).

55 party guests

"The President did not partake of any food at all at the restaurant as she was already not feeling well per her close-in personnel. It is just incidental that her last social for the day was for the First Gentleman's birthday," Pedrosa said.

There were 55 members in the President's party, which is the full seating capacity of the restaurant, Pedrosa said. (The First Gentleman's pre-birthday bash caused heavy traffic along Tomas Morato as police blocked off the area.)

Pedrosa said Osteria 88 was owned by Puno Enterpriser of Dondi Puno who last year took control of the Osteria Italia restaurant run by actress Ara Mina for three years.

In December 2005, the restaurant opened as a members-only resto with 88 "gourmet members" forking out P120,000 (consumable for six months) for the privilege to dig into the restaurant's prime continental cuisine from Black Angus Salpicado to Wagyu beef rib eye to baked Norwegian salmon fillet.

No oysters

"We did not take any chance with the safety and handling of the various cooked entrees such as salmon steak and osso buco tender beef. Contrary to reports, there were no raw food or oysters served."

Pedrosa argued that if the food was "rejectable," its ill effects would not have been immediate but would have taken four to six hours. "Other guests should have developed upset stomachs (just like the President) at the same time," said Pe-

Food and privacy

"Our members come here for the food and the privacy," said Pedrosa who noted that a typical meal in Osteria 88 would cost between P800 and P1,000 per person. "We're one of the best in fine dining. If we're a hotel, we'd



FINALLY FORCED TO REST: President Arroyo looks like she can hardly wait to jump out of bed and get cracking on her presidential duties.

MALACANANG PHOTO

be rated five-star luxury."

Pedrosa said the management decided to open the restaurant to nonmembers this month when some members complained of the

hassle of going to the restaurant whenever their relatives and friends wanted to eat there.

Pedrosa said it was too early to tell whether the bad publicity

would impact negatively on the restaurant. "I sure hope not because we really pride ourselves in our food quality and service," Pedrosa said.

GMA in charge: 'I'm fine'; leaves hospital today

From page A1

not even consider it.

The doctors also said "extreme stress" had lowered Ms Arroyo's resistance and made her vulnerable to infections.

"I think with all the stress she's currently having, [with her] duties and responsibilities ... there is some point in time where [there would be] a lower resistance," said Dr. Julian Gómez-Cervantes, a gastroenterologist. "[That's] probably the reason why the viral infection has developed."

Health Secretary Francisco Duque said that, as President, Ms Arroyo "has to attend to many things and this could be one reason why her resistance has gone down and made her vulnerable to mild infectious diseases," Duque told reporters.

Palace officials said Ms Arroyo's trip to Italy—where she will have an audience at the Vatican with Pope Benedict XVI—and then to Spain would still proceed, after doctors gave the green light for her to travel.

But instead of leaving straight for Europe, as scheduled, she will leave on Sunday at 10 a.m., officials said. She will return home on July 2.

In a floral hospital gown and with a laptop in front of her, Ms Arroyo told government television and radio reporters who were allowed to enter her fourth-floor Room 4012 suite that she was "feeling fine."

Light work

She said she was just doing "light work," when asked why her laptop was on her hospital bed.

Ms Arroyo did not talk about her medical condition, saying it would be her doctors who would speak about it.

Duque said Ms Arroyo started having loose bowel movements on Thursday morning.

In an earlier medical bulletin, Cervantes and Dr. Joven Cuñang, St. Luke's medical director, said the President suffered a bout of diarrhea and vomiting, accompanied by abdominal pain



MEDICAL BULLETIN: Reassuring announcements from left, St. Luke's Medical Director Dr. Joven Cuñang, gastroenterologist Dr. Juliet Gómez-Cervantes and Health Secretary Francisco Duque.

IN THIS CORNER: Manny Pacquiao takes a break from his training for the "thrilla in Manila" to visit his favorite cheerleader.

EIN RILLION
ERIKARAZAS

when she was brought to the hospital.

not give any medication to the President.

Full meal

They "hydrated" the President and since Thursday night, she "has been and is already comfortable."

The doctors said Ms Arroyo had acute infectious diarrhea, "secondary to a viral infection." She had also suffered a mild dehydration.

Briefing reporters last night, Cervantes said Ms Arroyo had already taken a full meal consisting of rice, meat, soup and vegetables.

"(She) is ready to be discharged (today) at her pleasure. She also can travel anytime," the hospital medical bulletin said.

Except for intravenous fluids, Cervantes said the doctors did

Not food poisoning

She said they were also not recommending any food restrictions but stressed that Ms Arroyo should be careful about the food she was taking.

Defensor and Duque said the possibility that the President had a case of food poisoning had not been considered following the findings of the doctors.

"We are not conducting an investigation as to what the President ate," Defensor told reporters.

"We're not considering food poisoning because the food that the President took (Thursday night) was taken by other people and they did not get sick like her," Duque said. (See related story on Page A6.)

Duque also said that viral infections were common these days and anyone was susceptible to them.

Back to cheerful self

"It is more of a viral infection," Cervantes said, adding that food poisoning was not considered by the doctors "considering the history (of her ailment) did not point to anything."

"She's back to her cheerful self," Duque said of the President.

Asked whether Ms Arroyo was fit to travel given her condition, Cervantes said "she can push through with her job anytime."

Cancelled activities

The viral ailment forced Ms Arroyo to cancel her activities yesterday and some of her appointments today.

The President was supposed to

be in Compostela Valley and Davao City yesterday. In Davao, she was to have presided over the third meeting of the Cabinet and the Regional Development Council on the government's mega-development plans.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, who visited the President, also told reporters that the Chief Executive would sign the law repealing the death penalty when she leaves the hospital today.

He said when he saw Ms Arroyo yesterday she had just finished her lunch, a meal of chicken arroz caldo.

"She was in high spirits and she was smiling," Defensor said.

Pacman comes

She also received many calls and flowers from supporters and local officials who wished her well and for her immediate recovery, Defensor said.

ery, Defensor said.

He said he and Presidential Management Staff chief Arthur Yap were the ones taking the calls and queries about Ms Arroyo's condition.

Among the first visitors in the hospital were Candaba Mayor Gerry Payao and former Caloocan City Mayor Rey Malonzo.

Yesterday's visitors also included boxing idol Manny Pacquiao.

The First Family, including First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, was also with the President but left early in the morning yesterday.

The President's first born, Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo, said the family appreciated those who had wished his mother well and prayed for her.

"I don't think the situation is a cause (for worry)," the younger Arroyo said.

Infection blamed on killer work schedule

From page A1

In the first year of the Arroyo presidency, then National Anti-Poverty Commission chief Ging Deles, who has since resigned from the Cabinet, described how it was to travel with the President: "One thing we have all learned when travelling with the President is that when she does stop to have a meal, you better take the nearest seat available and start eating, because after only a few mouthfuls, she will stand up and be ready to go."

Heavy workweek

Another former Cabinet member, ex-Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman, once said: "We have also learned that when there is food available, you should take it, because you never know when or where your next meal will be."

The four days prior to Thursday night when she was taken to the hospital were typical of Ms

Arroyo's work habits.

On Monday, she presided over a revenue command conference in Malacañang. She then held a news conference, witnessed the turnover of handguns purchased for the Philippine National Police and congratulated the police team that rescued a kidnap victim in Caloocan City. She ended her day by attending the oath-taking of the Malacañang Press Corps.

She started her day on Tuesday very early by leading the nationwide earthquake drill held at a Marikina City school. She then went back to the Palace to preside over two meetings with her Cabinet and key economic advisers.

Birthday bash, jobs fair

On Wednesday, Ms Arroyo went to Vigan City to attend not only the birthday bash of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson but also to inaugurate a new po-

lice station. In Malacañang, she attended the Gawad Saka awards as well as the awarding ceremony for the best peace and order councils in the country.

Last Thursday, Ms Arroyo was in Camp Aguinaldo to attend a job fair. She also presided over the oath-taking ceremonies for new Labor Secretary Arturo Brion and new Development Bank of the Philippines president Patricia Sto. Tomas.

Afterward, she sent off three Army battalions to rebel areas and then went to the Armed Forces Medical Center to cheer up wounded soldiers.

Loved for food

She ended the day by meeting foreign diplomats making farewell calls, after which she had that fateful dinner with her husband and some Cabinet members. Soon after the dinner, she fell ill.

Her Cabinet and security officials noticed how pale she looked and strongly advised her to seek medical attention immediately.

"If you look at her history, two executive secretaries had a heart operation (former Defense Secretary Renato de Villa and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo) and even her former Chief of Staff (and now Ambassador to Greece) Rigoberto Tiglao," Defensor said.

He said even Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had been hospitalized.

Defensor said that Ms Arroyo had a grueling schedule this week because she was leaving for Europe.

Standing up to GMA

"Everyone was rushing her to meet and talk (with these people) and to do this and that," Defensor said, adding that Ms Arroyo had a tendency to squeeze in as many

appointments she could for the day.

"When she sees an opening (in her schedule), she would immediately ask for another appointment to be set up," said Defensor.

For the past three months, he said those in charge of her appointments had been trying to rationalize the Presidents' work schedule.

"We all agreed to stand up to the President when she insists (on more appointments) but the past weeks we were overruled," he said.

Defensor said he himself would also sometimes feel the dumps.

Besides being overworked, Secretary Gonzalez also noted what he called Ms Arroyo's "hearty appetite."

"In all instances that I sat beside her, the President has always taken the food served to her with gusto. She is not picky with food change her ways.

"I doubt if the President will slow down. She has been a hands-on, early-morning-to-midnight type of executive for the longest time," said German, who also attributed the President's health breakdown to "concerns on the affairs of the state that are probably beginning to wear her down."

But Palace media consultant Reli German is skeptical about whether her hospital confinement would make Ms Arroyo change her ways.

"His advice to her boss? Sleep more.

"I think she does not sleep that much. She often calls us at early dawn because she wants to tell us whatever comes up on her mind before she forgets it," Gonzalez said.

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MOVING DAY. Some 300 soldiers of the 2nd Marine Battalion led by Lt. Col. Achilles Segumaliban prepare to sail off to Tawi-Tawi to replace the 11th Marine Battalion who will be reassigned to Sulu. The sendoff was part of yesterday's 108th anniversary celebration of the Navy. Lower photo shows a Marine official showing off a 50-caliber sniper rifle also as part of the celebration.

Marine colonel in Feb. standoff sent to Tawi-Tawi

A MARINE COLONEL who was involved in the stand-off at the Philippine Marines' Fort Bonifacio head-

the stand-off at the Philippine Marines' Fort Bonifacio headquarters last February was shipped off to Tawi-Tawi yesterday.

Lt. Col. Achilles Segumalian, chief of the 2nd Marine Battalion, did not give

cer's corps.

During the Febrary Incident, De Leon and Segumalian reportedly expressed support for Querubin, who is now under house arrest for allegedly joining the plot to

Colon Macapagal-Alroyo.

Segumalian's battalion will replace the 11th Marine Battalion which will undergo retraining before being shipped back to Jolo.

Fe B. Zamora

credence to suggestions that he was being sent to remote Tawi-Tawi as a punishment for publicly questioning the conduct of the May 2004

"No, I don't think so," Segumalian said in an interview during the send-off ceremonies yesterday for the 2nd Marine Battalion at the Philippine Navy headquarters on Roxas Blvd.

Navy chief Vice Admiral Mateo Mayuga said the deployment of the 2nd Marine Battalion marked the official launching of the Fleet Marine Team Tandem, which is the Philippine Navy's contribution to the internal security and counter-terrorism operations of the Armed Forces.

The send-off of the 2nd Marine Battalion was a highlight of the 108th anniversary of the Philippine Navy yesterday.

Mayuga said Seguinalian was not under investigation for his role in the stand-off in which Marine Col. Ariel Querubin called for a people power uprising in protest at the relief of Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda as Marine Commandant.

Mayuga said no such stand-off happened on Feb. 26.

"In our definition there was no such stand-off," he said.

Mayuga said that some officers, including Segumallian and himself, had undergone "a change of personality."

"If you talk to Segumalian now you will notice that I was not the same Segumalian that you saw on that day. Even I myself became a different personality," Mayug said in Bilingual.

said in Filipino.

But only last week, Col. Orlando de Leon, chief of staff of the Philippine Marines, resigned his post, expressing his disgust at the alleged



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SIX PEOPLE DIED HERE. A five-vehicle convoy of Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan was hit by a bomb hidden in a parked vehicle and detonated as soon as the governor's motorcade was passing by the new public market in Shariff Aguak. REUTERS

Bomb blasts Maguindanao governor convoy; 6 killed

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"The explosive was an improvised device. It was fitted with a timer," Del Prado said.

Norie Unas, Maguindanao provincial administrator, told the *Inquirer* that Ampatuan was unhurt and was resting as of press time. "From all indications, the governor was the target," Unas said.

Unas declined to say who could be behind the latest attack on the governor, but other sources within Ampatuan's circle said his enemies within the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) were the most likely suspects.

MILF denial

But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, denied they were responsible for the blast.

"I can honestly say that we have nothing to do with the latest attempt on the life of the governor," he said.

Kabalu also offered MILF's help to fast track the investigation. "We are ready to help if they need our help for the speedy arrest of the perpetrators once they are identified," he said.

"We're cooperating with the government to determine which group was behind the attack," said Von al-Haj, head of the MILF ceasefire panel, adding the incident was isolated and would not affect peace talks.

Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) said the bomb attack against his father was a cowardly act and was aimed at sowing terror.

"It was aimed at destroying our efforts toward peace and development. But the suspects clearly failed," he said.

Targets of assassins

Andal Ampatuan Jr., another son of the governor, blamed "terrorists"



AMPATUAN: Victim 10 times over

for the attempt on his father's life. He did not elaborate.

The Ampatuans have been subjected to similar attacks in the past.

In December 2002, Mayor Saudi Ampatuan of Datu Piang town, a son of the Maguindanao governor, was killed when an improvised explosive device went off as he was walking back to his house.

A year earlier, Ampatuan survived an assassination attempt when assailants opened fire on his convoy. That same year, he survived another ambush.

Police officials have not ruled out terrorism and personal vendetta as motives for the latest attack on Ampatuan.

"We are looking at many angles. It could be terrorism, it could also be grudges, it could also be politics," said Sr. Supt. Ahmad Mamalinta, director of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

"It wasn't an ambush. The bomb

was planted; it was intended (to explode there)," Mamalinta said.

Saudi Ampatuan Jr., the governor's grandson and mayor of Datu Saudi Uy Ampatuan town, said the explosion missed the governor's car which was ahead of the convoy and was about 10 meters away.

Police spokesperson Sr. Supt. Samuel Pagdilao said the national police will be sending bomb experts to Maguindanao to help identify and establish the signature of the bomb.

"Investigators should get to the bottom of this," he said.

Suspects II

One Army officer, Col. Felipe Tabas, said there were indications the bombing was carried out by Jemaah Islamiyah, a regional network of Muslim militants linked to Osama bin Laden's al Qaida.

But the Maguindanao governor dismissed that idea and said he suspected his attackers came from another group "considered as an enemy of the state", which he did not identify.

The Ampatuan family wields a great deal of political and economic influence.

One of the governor's sons, Zaldy, was elected in August as the governor of a five-province autonomous Muslim region in the south with backing from the national government in Manila.

Three other sons are town mayors.

Ms Arroyo's perceived support for Zaldy Ampatuan angered former Muslim rebels from the Moro National Liberation Front who had held the post of governor since signing a peace deal in 1996. With reports from Luigie A. del Puerto, Reuters, AP

Top PNP post a toss-up between Calderon, Razon

From page A1

extended by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Lomibao said he and Ms Arroyo have yet to discuss his retirement, although he said his "mind is set to retire on July 5."

There are, however, strong indications that the term of Lomibao, who assumed the top PNP post on March 14, 2005, may no longer be extended.

A source told the *Inquirer* that Malacañang has already informed the police through a letter that the President would be available for the outgoing chief's retirement honors and change of command ceremonies on July 5.

"This is to confirm the availability of Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, for your retirement honors and the change of command ceremonies of the PNP..." said a letter from the Office of Presidential Appointments shown to the *Inquirer*.

The Palace letter, however, did not say who would replace Lomibao.

No jockeying

Surprisingly, there has been little report of jockeying among generals for the position of Philippine National Police chief, one of the most sought-after in the government.

One ranking cop surmised that generals probably knew that the succession issue had already been decided.

By tradition, the top police post usually goes to the most senior and competent official, Lomibao told the *Inquirer*. "Seniority has a great effect," he said.

By law, the President can choose Lomibao's successor from among the scores of one-star generals in the PNP.

Traditionally, however, the job has gone to a two-star or three-star general.

Asked if the job, once he leaves, is a toss-up between Razon and Calderon, Lomibao said:

"More or less ... because they still have more than one year to go," he said.

Razon, a member of PMA Class '74, is deputy chief for operations and is the third highest PNP officer. Calderon, a member of PMA Class '73, is deputy chief for administration, and ranks No. 2 in the PNP hierarchy.

Both Razon and Calderon are three-star generals.

A PNP officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter, noted that while Razon got his third star ahead of Calderon, the latter occupies the second highest post.

No retirement talk

"No," he said when asked if Ms Arroyo already spoke to him about retirement. "The President, until the day of retirement, is still perhaps making the decision."

Asked what he would do if Ms Arroyo urged him to extend his tenure, Lomibao said: "Maybe I will consider that one. *Saka na lang kani mag-usap* (We'll talk about it later)."



LOMIBAO: Packing for July 5 retirement

"That already laid the groundwork for Calderon's (assumption)," said the source.

"If the President makes no announcement extending Lomibao's term, and she does not announce a successor, then by operation of law Calderon will succeed him," he said.

Related to GMA?

He added that at this time of seeming uncertainty, the President's choice "boils down to trust and confidence," meaning she will pick the official whom she trusts most.

Calderon is said to be related to the President. But he has neither confirmed nor denied it.

When Calderon was promoted to Deputy Director General on April 21, Lomibao had described him as the "chief PNP in waiting."

A Camp Crame insider said that Ms Arroyo, of course, could choose anyone she wants, even less senior officers, and withhold her decision until the very last minute. She once extended the term of at least one PNP chief.

Lomibao said he has already begun packing his things at the White House, the PNP chief's official residence in Camp Crame.

No retirement talk

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San Beda law school drops 26 top profs seeking dean's ouster

From page A1

in the meantime."

The controversy began last school year when San Beda's rector-president, Fr. Anscar Chupungco, approved Jara's recommendation that three fourth-year students be allowed to stay despite twice failing Torts and Damages and/or Political Law Review.

Under the school's regulations, such a failure meant automatic non-readmission unless the dean, for "justifiable reasons," reversed the ruling.

The exception resting on the dean's discretion was hardly exercised, but since it was part of the school policy, Jara should have at least consulted the professors involved, Brillantes claimed.

Adversarial

"The issue could have been settled if only the dean and the rector were open to a genuine dialogue," he said. "Why didn't they talk with the professors before allowing the students to stay?"

Chupungco said dialogues had been conducted but the professors were purportedly "adversarial."

"They claim a kind of autonomy supposedly granted to them ever since—that's unacceptable," he said.

"They have the attitude of trying to run the school independent of the authority. The time has come not to tolerate this anymore."

Brillantes said hiring new professors may be unwise as they may not measure up to the effectiveness of the veterans.

"That's unfair," said Chupungco, noting that some of those who were not re-hired had been negligent in attending class and submitting grades.

"We have a new set of good professors and they have all promised to abide by the rules."

"The school's standards won't be weakened by its compassion," Delson said.

34 new profs

The 34 new faculty members, 25 of whom are San Beda alumni, include six regional trial court judges, two law school deans, and newly appointed Elections Commissioner Rene Sarmiento, according to Delson.

Delson said the administration was not completely closing the door on the 26 professors who were among the 31 petitioners in the letter demanding the resignation of the dean dated March 2.

"Perhaps, they can return when we have a new administration whose line of thinking is the same as theirs," he said. "But for Dean

Jara, he wants respect while he's the dean." In a Feb. 21 faculty meeting, purportedly the first in Jara's six years as dean, Jara explained that he had recommended in favor of the three students because they had "good grades" and met the minimum 79 QPI in their junior year, the 31 petitioners wrote in the March 2 letter, a copy of which was furnished the *Inquirer*.

'Compassion'

The petitioners said they later found out that one student actually failed to meet the QPI (qualitative point index) requirement.

"With your failure to sufficiently justify your actions, we hoped that you would find in yourself the moral courage to admit a mistake," they wrote Jara. "Instead, you declared that you have no duty to explain your actions because you just exercised what you claim is your sole discretion."

Delson said the decision to keep the students was partly made out of "compassion" on the part of the Benedictine-run law school, a Catholic institution.

But he said the three students would automatically have to leave should they fail the subjects a third time.

"They were already in their fourth year and no other law school would accept them because of the required one-year residency," he said.

Last May 23, Jara issued a memorandum informing professors about the "expiration of (their) part-time semestral teaching contracts," and declaring that "all teaching positions in the College of Law are deemed vacated."

Professors like human rights lawyer Rene Saguisig complained.

"The memo sounded compatible with reprisal, a strong word, I know, against those who took a position, as principled as yours, but did not prevail," Saguisig later wrote Jara, referring to the resignation petition.

Brillantes, who had been teaching quite sparingly since 2000, said it was never the practice at San Beda to issue such a memo, more so, to identify professors as "part time."

'Abrasive'

"Maybe the reason why previous deans and previous school administrators had avoided the term 'part-time' was because they had some decency to be somehow courteous," he wrote Jara on June 5.

Saguisig said it sounded "most abrasive" to practically refer to justices, judges, and other lawyers teaching at San Beda as "contractuals."

By Tonette T. Orejas

HEAVILY ARMED MEN KILLED TWO businessmen in a shooting rampage yesterday evening inside an office at the Subic Bay Freeport, the first such violent incident in the industrial complex, an official said.

One other person was wounded in the attack that occurred at 6 p.m. in the office of one of the slain men, retired Gen. Jose Calimlim, senior deputy administrator for operations at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, told the *Inquirer*.

"(Investigators are) looking at various angles, including possible busi-

ness conflicts," Calimlim said by phone.

The office where the attack took place was located in the yard of Asia International Auctioneers along the Argonaut Highway, Calimlim said.

Trade in used vehicles

He identified the fatalities as Ric Rubig and Rommel Pineda. One of their companions, identified as Donald Garin, was seriously wounded, he added.

According to Calimlim, the two slain men had brokered for several freeport-based companies that traded used vehicles at the Freeport. It was not clear which companies they re-

cently did business with, he said.

The shooting occurred inside Tubig's office, where SBMA investigators found empty shells of Armalite and M-16 rifles.

Central Luzon probbers

The exact name of Tubig's office was not immediately available.

The two fatalities died shortly after they were brought to the James L. Gordon Memorial Hospital in nearby Olongapo City.

The identities of the attackers were not known at press time.

Calimlim said investigators from the Central Luzon police had been asked to assist in the investigation.

SC ECHEGARAY 'ERROR'

Anti-crime crusaders want Panganiban's claim probed

By Nelson F. Flores

VOLUNTEERS AGAINST CRIME AND CORRUPTION Chair Dante Jimenez yesterday asked the Office of the Ombudsman to investigate Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban's claim that the Supreme Court may have committed "judicial error" when it imposed the death penalty on rape convict Leo Echegaray.

In a nine-page complaint, Jimenez said the Ombudsman should conduct a swift and thorough investigation against the incumbent Supreme Court justices for purposes of impeachment and against retired SC justices and RTC judge for purposes of criminal prosecution.

Jimenez said if Panganiban cannot prove his allegation that the Supreme Court committed "judicial error" in Echegaray's case, "he should be recommended for impeachment for his unbecoming conduct, for maligning the name of the institution he represents and for causing erosion of public trust and confidence on the judiciary as a whole" pursuant to Section 4 of Republic Act 6713 (Code of Conduct and Ethical Standard for public Officials and Employees).

Court records showed that the Supreme Court affirmed on June 25, 1996 the decision of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 104 imposing the death penalty on Echegaray after finding him to be either the father or stepfather of his rape victim.

"The fact the ten-year old (Baby Echegaray) referred to the accused-appellant



PANGANIBAN

as "Papa" is reason enough to conclude that accused appellant is either the father or stepfather to (Baby). Thus the act of sexual assault perpetrated by the accused on his young victim has become all the more repulsive and perverse. This law has made it inevitable under the circumstances of this case that the accused-appellant face the supreme penalty of death," the Supreme Court said in its decision in affirming Echegaray's death sentence.

Almost 10 years after the ruling, Panganiban, in a speech before the Free Legal Assistance Group, said the Supreme Court might have committed "judicial error" in the death of Echegaray saying "the complaint alleged

that the victim was the daughter of Echegaray. However, it was proven during the trial that he was not the father, stepfather or grandfather of the victim."

In his complaint, Jimenez said that if it were true as Chief Justice Panganiban claimed, then the QCRTC judge of Branch 104 who first decided the case and then the justices who concurred in the Supreme Court decision were guilty of Gross Inexcusable Negligence in failing to appreciate this fact and affirming the trial court's erroneous decision to impose the death penalty.

This is a clear violation of Sec. 3 of RA 3019 (Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act), Jimenez stressed.

If the RTC judge in Echegaray's case indeed erred in imposing the death penalty, by all means, he should be disciplined accordingly by the SC for gross ignorance of the law and criminally charged. His ignorance has unjustly caused a loss of life," Jimenez argued.

Aside from Jimenez, the other complainants in this case are lawyer Jose Malvar Villegas Jr. of the Citizens Crime Watch, lawyer Ernesto Villagarcia of the Kapatiran Kontra Krimen and Dr. Be Caralde of the Bantay Bayan Foundation.

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Customs chief says topping corruption list 'a good thing'

HIS AGENCY TOPPED THE OMBUDSMAN'S list of the country's most corrupt agencies but Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales does not mind.

"That's a good thing," said Morales, reacting to a statement from Ombudsman Mercidas Gutierrez that the customs bureau with the Bureau of Internal Revenue were the most corrupt government agencies based on the number of graft cases filed as a result of internal lifestyle checks.

Morales said it meant the Department of Finance, which has supervisory control over the customs and internal revenue bureaus, was doing its job well.

"The way I look at it the basis of the Ombudsman's report was the lifestyle check... because that's where their data came from," he said.

Morales said Finance Secretary Margarito Teves has been conscientious in asking for the statements of assets and liabilities of customs appraisers and examiners to determine whether their assets could have been legally earned based on their income.

In 2003, Malacañang issued Executive Order 259 which allowed the DOF to create an internal affairs team to institutionalize lifestyle checks on revenue collection officers.

Called the Revenue Integrity Protection Service, or RIPS, the team carries out investigations and files complaints against erring revenue officials.

Morales said he was not aware how other agencies checked on their personnel.

He said he himself has ordered seminars to be conducted in the DOF to teach customs employees how to fight graft.

He believes the customs bureau's performance so far shows that it has been effective in fighting corruption. He pointed out that if corruption was still rampant, the bureau would not have met its collection targets.

The BOC surpassed its collection target in

the first five months of the year by about P4.5 billion.

Gutierrez said the Department of Public Works and Highways and the Department of Education followed the BOC and BIR in the list of the most corrupt agencies.

Sought for comment, Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane said he believes the department has gone down in ranking of agencies perceived to be corrupt.

Ebdane said he has instituted reforms in the department. He said he has ensured that DPWH employees would follow procedures so they would not run afoul of the law.

Leila R. Salaverria

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Manila Water
Upgrading of pipelines to cause temporary water interruption in portion of Makati City

Manila Water is currently undertaking an aggressive capital expenditure program to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. In line with this, the company will upgrade large pipelines along EDSA and Ayala which will result in a temporary cutoff of water supply. The interruption will begin 10:00 p.m., Saturday, June 24, 2006, up to 8:00 a.m., Sunday, June 25. The following barangays will be affected: Bel-Air, Salcedo, Legaspi, Bgy. Poblacion, Pio Del Pilar, San Lorenzo, Palm Village and Guadalupe Viejo.

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.



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TCT Nos. S - 19518, S - 19519, S - 19520
Land Area: 2,429sqm.
Improvements: 7 storey bldg. w/ roof deck
Proposal Type: Long Term Lease

2. **GSIS Quzon City Property**
Location: Elliptical Road, Quzon City
TCT Nos. N-187226, N-187227
Land Area: 29, 844 Sqm.
Proposal Type: Long Term Lease

Interested parties may submit their proposals to the Disposition of Acquired Assets Department, 5th floor, Core C, GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City on or before July 14, 2006.

All proposals shall be evaluated by the AAEC and shall be subject to the final approval of the President and General Manager and/or BOARD OF TRUSTEES. GSIS reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals.

(Sgd) **RENATO R. SANTICO**
Senior Vice President
Housing and Real Property Development Group

Gov't gave Lafayette P3.5-B tax break

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE GOVERNMENT HAS FOREGONE collecting \$63.88 million or P3.57 billion in taxes from Lafayette Philippines Inc. for mining gold and base metals in Albay because of the tax perks given to the Australian firm by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza).

A report prepared by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on Lafayette's operations in Rapu-Rapu, a 5,000-ha island in Albay, showed that the national and local governments could earn \$122.69 million or P6.8 billion over six years if no tax incentives had been offered to the firm.

Instead, the government stands to gain only \$58.81 million or P3.29 billion during Lafayette's six-year mine life because of the tax perks enjoyed by Lafayette's subsidiary Rapu-Rapu Processing Inc. as a locator in a special economic zone.

Peza had declared 41.38 hectares of the

180-ha mine area of Lafayette a special economic zone, exempting the company from paying real estate and other taxes, and requiring it to pay only five percent of the mandated 35 percent corporate income tax.

Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes has asked Peza to review the economic zone status of a portion of Rapu-Rapu.

The 70-page report that found Lafayette guilty of lapses that caused two mine spills also noted that the tax incentives granted to Lafayette made the sharing scheme "grossly unfavorable to the Philippine government."

The current scheme stands at 24-74 in favor of Lafayette.

Reyes said he would push for 54-46, or the scheme representing a tax perk-free arrangement with Lafayette in favor of the government.

Lafayette Mining Ltd. said yesterday it paid a fine of P10.4 million (\$195,490) imposed by the government after the two cyanide spills in its

mine in October last year. The company also said it expected to fully comply this week with 15 conditions set by the government before it can start a 30-day test run at its mine on Rapu-Rapu, which was ordered to halt operations after the spills.

"We're definitely hoping that for our own benefit we will be able to start the test run soon," said Bayani Agabin, a lawyer and vice president at Lafayette's Philippine unit.

Reyes said he would push for 54-46, or the scheme representing a tax perk-free arrangement with Lafayette in favor of the government.

The government is pushing a revival of the mining sector to attract foreign investment and reduce poverty but has come under pressure from influential Roman Catholic bishops voicing concerns about the environmental impact.

Lafayette, the first foreign firm to develop and run a mine in the Philippines in almost 40 years, estimates Rapu-Rapu will generate revenues of \$350 mil-

lion per year from annual production of 10,000 tons of copper in concentrates, 14,000 tons of zinc, 50,000 ounces of gold and 600,000 ounces of silver.

A fact-finding committee investigating the spills in October, chaired by Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes, called for the permanent closure of Lafayette's operations, a moratorium on mining on Rapu-Rapu and a review of the law allowing 100-percent foreign ownership of local mines.

The test run at the Rapu-Rapu mine will involve three stages—a five-day run of the processing plant with water to detect pipe leaks; a nine-day run with ore but without the minerals; and a 15-day run with ore and metals.

Some estimates value the Philippines' mineral wealth at \$1 trillion. But many foreign investors have been discouraged by political turmoil, corruption, insurrections in the resource-rich south and opposition from bishops and indigenous groups.

With a Reuters report

Aussie mining firm coughs up P10M for fine

LAFAYETTE PHILS. ANNOUNCED YES-
TERDAY it had paid a P10.4-million fine
for two mine incidents in October as it
completed additional pollution safe-
guards imposed by the government
preparatory to testing its processing fa-
cilities and eventually its resumption of
operations.

The payment and the new safeguards
were ordered by Environment Secretary
Angelo Reyes as conditions before the test
run, which would involve only water ini-
tially to allow the company's technicians
to check the system for leaks and further
fine-tuning, Lafayette said in a statement.

Lafayette said its new management
under Carlos G. Dominguez had spent
about P400 million for these remedial
measures since taking over last January
to show that the company would operate
with the full assurance of environmental
and health protection.

Lafayette's word

Dominguez, who spearheads Lafayette's
bid to regain the public's trust in the com-
pany, had given his word that Lafayette
would resume operations only after its sys-
tems and facilities pass all tests.

At full operations, the company said it
is expected to directly hire 900 people,
most of them from the host communities
of Albay and Sorsogon.

With new revenues, the company said
it would launch a series of projects that
will directly benefit these communities,
with education, livelihood, and environ-
mental protection as priorities, includ-
ing P31 million worth of social develop-
ment projects.

In its decision, the Department of Envi-
ronment and Natural Resources (DENR)
noted that aside from creating jobs, the
project would also pay the government
P3 billion in taxes, of which P244 million
will go to local governments.

Full remediation

Reyes noted that allowing the project
to resume operations would ensure the
full remediation and rehabilitation of
the mine site after the project is termi-
nated in about seven years.

"An abandoned open pit mine is not
an attractive proposition as it will simply
cause small miners to descend on the
area and they will operate without envi-
ronmental safeguards and safety mea-
sures," said Reyes.

"In this case, the government, and ult-
imately the Filipino taxpayer, will have
to shoulder the considerable cost of re-
mediation and rehabilitation. Allowing
Lafayette to resume operations will al-
low an ECC-consistent mine rehabilita-
tion and decommissioning plan to be im-
plemented," he added.

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Saturday, June 24, 2006

Birth of John the Baptist

1st Reading: Is 49:1-6

2nd Reading: Acts 13:22-26

Gospel: Luke 1:57-66, 80

When the time came for Elizabeth, she
gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and rela-
tives heard that the merciful Lord had done a
wonderful thing for her and they rejoiced
with her.

When on the eighth day they came to at-
tend the circumcision of the child, they wanted
to name him Zechariah after his father. But
his mother said, "Not so; he shall be called
John." They said to her, "No one in your fam-
ily has that name"; and they asked the father
by means of signs for the name he wanted to
give. Zechariah asked for a writing tablet and
wrote on it, "His name is John," and they
were very surprised. Immediately Zechariah
could speak again and his first words were in
praise of God.

A holy fear came on all in the neighbor-
hood, and throughout the hills of Judea the
people talked about these events. All who
heard of it pondered in their minds and won-
dered, "What will this child be?" For they un-
derstood that the hand of the Lord was with
him.

As the child grew up, he was seen to be
strong in the Spirit; he lived in the desert
till the day when he appeared openly in Is-
rael.

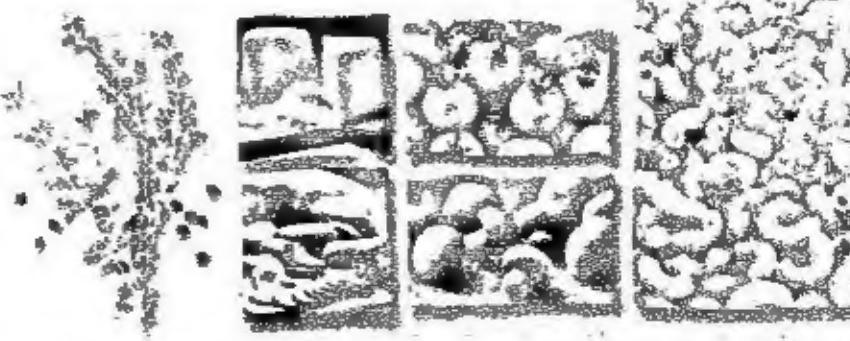
Commentary

John: called from his mother's womb, a prophet that is an arrow of God, a sharp-edged sword of the Word of God, sent to the heart of the people who stray. God holds him in his quiver until it is time, as servant who shows forth his glory to all. He lives to declare the coming of the light and restore Israel, to go before the face of the Lord to come. He is known only by God and when he is born the tradition shifts. He is named John, beloved of God not in the line of his father's family. Even his name opens the mouth of his father and calls forth the praise of God. What will this child be? Even as we live our lives called in baptism we too must live as this sword, this arrow, this servant of God going before the face of the Lord.

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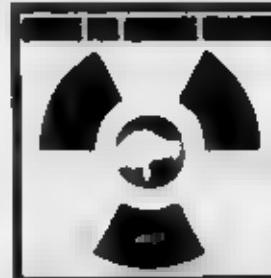
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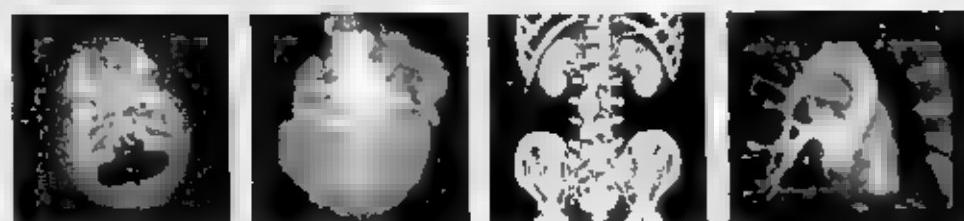
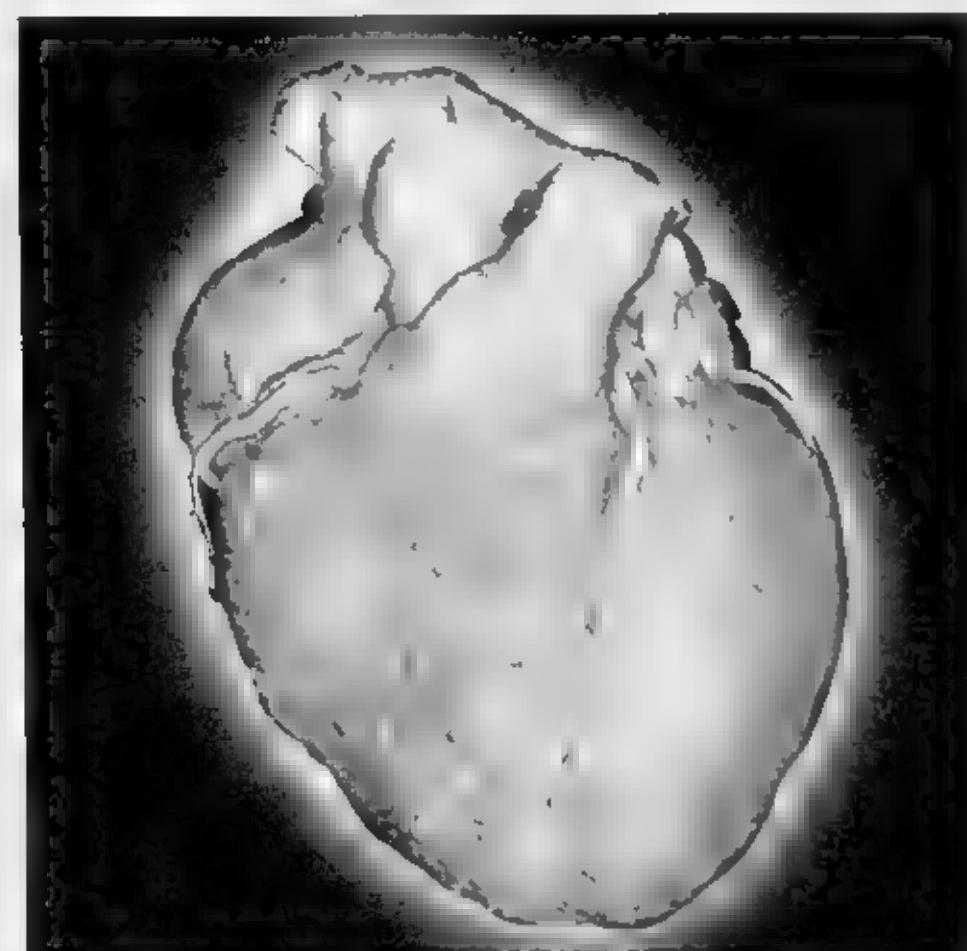
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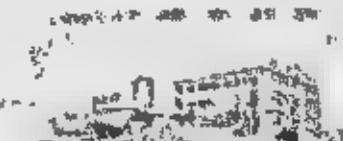
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Below average

THE REPORTED \$200-MILLION WORLD BANK loan for education comes as a breath of fresh air after a series of bad news for a sector that has long been plagued by shortages, tight budgets, political meddling, etc. This is not to say that the \$200-million loan will solve the crisis in our educational system. In fact, the shortcomings of the public school system are only half of the crisis. The other half lies in us: our lack of resolve or political will to address it. We must do more than just rely on outside assistance to solve the crisis and do what we have to do fast.

EDITORIAL The statistics are there for all to see. As of the latest count, our public school system lacks more than 10,000 elementary and high school teachers, not to mention textbooks and others. Making things worse, only about 19 percent of 51,000 teachers scored 75 percent or better in English in a 2004 Self-Assessment Test conducted by the Department of Education, and a big number of Science and Math teachers did not major in those subjects.

These inadequacies may partly explain the disturbing academic performance of our students and the dubious literacy rate in a country touted as one of the most highly educated in the region and once Southeast Asia's favorite source of quality education. Around 9 million of the 57.6 million Filipinos aged 10-64 years are "functionally illiterate," meaning, "unable to read, write, subtract and add, or understand instructions—something normally learned by Grade 4." Even so, the "functional literacy rate" of 85 percent is "probably overstated." Among Grade 6 kids, only 26 percent have a mastery of English, 15 percent of Science, and 31 percent of Math; and among senior high school students, only 7 have mastered English, 2 percent, Science, and 16 percent, Math.

In the Trends in Math and Science Survey (TIMSS) taken in 2003, the Philippines scored the lowest among a group of Asian countries that included Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

To the credit of the private sector, a growing number of corporations and individuals have been responding to the crisis in various ways—building classrooms, providing learning facilities, funding scholarships, etc. And more and more local government units are pitching in, according to the Foundation for Worldwide People Power, which itself has launched Education Revolution 2006, a movement that seeks to mobilize entire communities in promoting quality education.

But the national government has yet to match these initiatives. In fact, it treats the crisis with some show of concern only around school year openings, and largely forgets it the rest of the year. The national government budget for education is very revealing. For example, in 2005, out of the total budget of P907.56 billion, the DepEd got only P112 billion. In the bigger P1.053-trillion budget proposed for 2006, the DepEd's budget is reduced to P108 billion. If we look deeper, 85 percent of the education department's annual budget goes to pay the salaries of teachers. That leaves a mere 15 percent for capital outlay, maintenance and operations (and needless to say, the actual amount spent for such items is even smaller because of corruption).

It may be argued that, among the departments, the DepEd has still the biggest appropriation. But it only amounts to 12 percent of the national budget compared to the ideal 20 percent.

It may be foolish to see some relief coming from our lawmakers. For example, how much of their pork barrel would they rather spend for non-priority projects, like waiting sheds and basketball courts, than for education?

It was only after the nation's attention was focused on the classroom shortage (which was denied by President Macapagal-Arroyo) that the bicameral conference committee, upon the instance of the Senate, sought to increase the DepEd's budget. But then the 2006 budget is unlikely to be passed by Congress, and the 2005 budget is poised for reenactment.

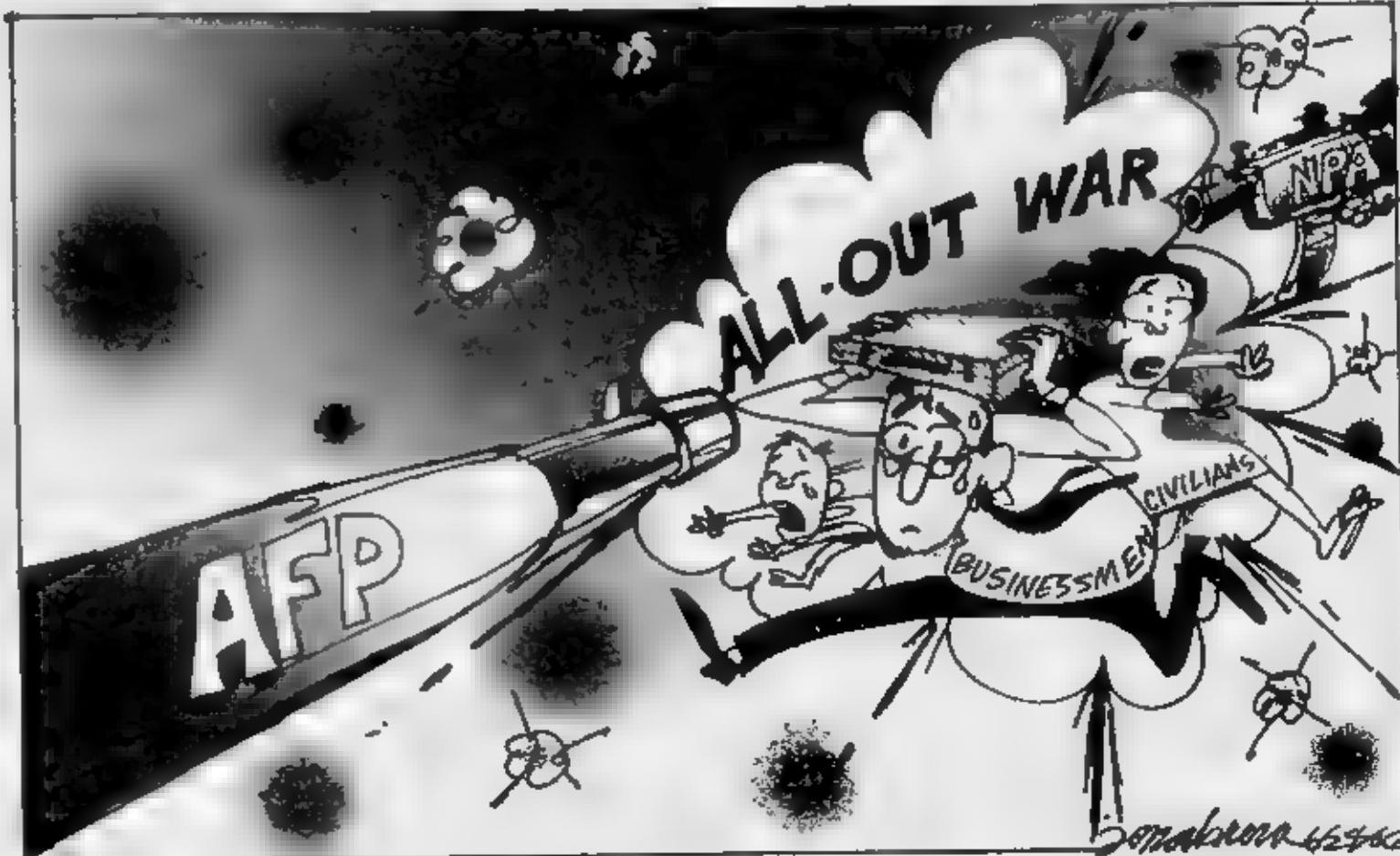
Significantly, the President has promised an additional P1 billion for her all-out war against communists to be taken from the "non-repeating projects" included in the 2005 budget. She has also committed another P1 billion for the government's anti-corruption campaign. Nothing for education. That surely says a lot about her priorities. And yet, the Constitution says the government should give the "highest budgetary priority to education."

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'The most formidable weapon'

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz



Let us rally against the new dictatorship with our sovereign will as our most formidable weapon

all the members of the House of Representatives

Trial will be conducted by the Senate to be presided by the Chief Justice when the President of the Philippines is the respondent. Conviction shall require the vote of two-thirds of all the members of the Senate.

The judgment shall not extend beyond removal from office and disqualification to hold any other position in the government, but the accused shall still be subject to prosecution under our criminal laws.

Despite the strong evidence against President Joseph Estrada during his impeachment trial, it is doubtful if he could have been convicted with no less than 12 senators determined to acquit him. The 11 other senators were 5 short of the 16 votes needed to convict.

Last year, the complaint for impeachment

against President Arroyo did not even reach first base. Her accusers could not enlist the one-third vote needed to refer the matter to the Senate.

One maneuver the complainers against Ms. Arroyo are guarding against is the pre-emption of their bona fide charges by a fake complaint to be filed by her allies that is sure to be dismissed for lack of merit. Such a scheme will prevent the filing of another complaint against her during a period of one year, as prohibited by the Constitution.

Reportedly, there will be a vigilance task force to prevent the hatching of the insidious scheme. How? By violently preventing the filing of such a sham complaint? That would be a strong-arm tactic that would negate the peaceful (and intelligent) image of the enemies of the questioned Malacañang tenant.

I have the highest respect for the civic-minded persons who will file the complaint for impeachment against President Arroyo. They deserve the esteem and encouragement of all Filipinos who value freedom and detest oppression. I am personally determined to give them my full support in the exercise of my own resources, including my devotion to the Rule of Law.

My special admiration for Josefina T. Lichauco, a worthy colleague in the bar, for inspiring and leading the stalwart defenders in their threatened but undaunted ramparts.

All of us who share their passion for liberty are co-complainants with them in the condemnation of the abuses of the present administration under Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Let us rally against the new dictatorship with our sovereign will as our most formidable weapon under the flag of the tattered Constitution.

Bad laws lead to poor revenue take

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod



REVENUE COMMISSIONER JOJO BUNAG asked me to lunch after this column put him under a microscope a couple of weeks ago (where he unfortunately didn't come out looking too good). The request was done in the usual Asian manner—roundabout—that is to say, Bunag to friend to my husband Christian back to friend back to Bunag and finally to me (all through text), until a mutually convenient time and place could be arranged.

I appreciate the commissioner's efforts to explain his side, although it could have been done in a more efficient, albeit less pleasant, manner had he written his reaction and sent it to this newspaper. At least, it wouldn't have cost me so much (I paid for my own lunch—my call—and it set me back a pretty penny). The bright side is that Bunag is a very congenial person, and he thoughtfully provided me with several annual reports of the BIR, and other information that I asked for.

He made the following points, which in the interest of transparency and fair play, I faithfully report without comment: (1) The 2006 BIR targets were a "done deal" before Bunag, who was a deputy to Willy Parayno, took over; (2) Parayno's BIR met the 2003 targets, but did not meet the 2004 targets; (3) the targets for 2006 may have been set too high, and P20 billion of that was wrongfully assigned to the BIR rather than to the Bureau of Customs; (4) The 2-percentage point increase in the VAT starting this year isn't going to increase tax revenues to any appreciable extent; (5) Nevertheless, Bunag has changed his tune, and thinks that the targets can now be met; and (6) The head of the Large Taxpayers Service (LTS), who was removed and frozen during Rene Bañez's watch, did not get reappointed to that unit—she was instead promoted to deputy commissioner by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In connection with the last point, I apologize to the current head of the LTS, Merlinda L. Ordoña, for any grief my giving out wrong information may have caused her.

son with the foregone revenues as a result of the lousy fiscal incentives program (the objective of which is supposedly to encourage investments, both foreign and domestic), also passed by Congress. Why is it a lousy program? Because a just-completed study undertaken by Renato Reside of the UP School of Economics, entitled (dramatically but aptly) "Business and Government Without a Conscience" ("The tragic redundancy of fiscal incentives for investment in the Philippines") finds that a large amount of incentives are redundant: they are given to many firms that would have invested anyway.

Reside estimates that 95 percent of the value of investments registered by the Board of Investments were given incentives that were redundant, and the cost to Filipinos of these incentives (income tax holidays, tax and duty exemptions) amounted to about P43.2 billion in 2004. This does not include the cost of redundancies in other "investment-promoting agencies" such as the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and Clark Special Economic Zone.

To make matters worse, Reside, using econometric tools, finds that the incentives are "impotent"—they do not have the predictive power for cross-region investment (which is consistent with the results of cross-country studies). Rather, what influences the investment are real per capita GDP (i.e., a strong regional market), functional literacy (access to educated labor inputs promotes investment), and infrastructure (high road density promotes investment).

The biggest tragedy, of course, is that in giving the incentives to those who don't need them, much-needed resources are lost that could have been used to improve the very education and infrastructure, which are the true promoters of investment.

There is a lesson here: Before Congress points to the notes in other people's eyes, it should deal with the note in its own eye first.

But large as that loss is, it pales in comparison

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2006

OPINION

A3

Save the Constitution but lose the nation?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



A NEW GROUP CALLED "ONE VOICE" IS IMPRESSIVE as it counts with eight bishops (out of 120 CBCP members), former Cabinet members, two former election commissioners, several 1986 Constitutional Commission members, the superior of the Jesuits in the Philippines, a number of educators, NGO workers, etc. In a full-page ad, it stated its major thesis: that there is no need to change the Constitution as basic social and electoral reforms can be done without it.

To my mind, the argument is flawed. Many reforms the group seeks are on every Filipino's wish list, e.g., social and economic infrastructure and safety-nets for the poor, but most of them need legislation. Our experience in the past 60 years, however, shows that such laws cannot be passed by our perennially deadlocked two-chamber set-up. For instance, One Voice rightly cites housing as a major concern, but the bill creating the Department of Housing has slept in the Senate, along with many other reform bills. There's also the perpetual conflict between the executive and legislative. Under the parliamentary system, the two branches are fused under a party government that claims full responsibility for governance.

One Voice has raised apprehensions that are not valid. It says the proposed Constitution is not acceptable because it takes away our right to vote directly for the president. It's conceded that Filipinos want to vote directly for their president for a good number of reasons, the pecuniary and the circus-like campaign atmosphere included. But to use this as a major argument is clearly to play to the gallery. They surely know that many nations do not vote directly for the head of government, but also are more progressive than our country.

One Voice also raised the bogey of no elections in 2007. This was indeed a scenario raised in the consultative commission by a very small group, but this was quickly killed in the debates.

It also raised fears about having a "super-President with additional Prime Minister powers." But isn't the proposal to create the new post of prime minister precisely intended to dilute the powers

of a strong president, so that by 2010 he would be reduced to a ceremonial role, or perhaps even become non-existent?

The group also asserted that "constitutional reforms are best done through a more transparent Constitutional Convention after the 2007 elections." But the lessons of the 1971 Con-Con show that such an undertaking takes years to finish and is very expensive. Sen. Edgardo Angara, who was in that Con-Con, recalled that the preamble alone took over six months and consumed the entire P15 million budget. By the time the Con-Con finishes its work, *baka tapos na ang boxing* and we would have been left far behind by our neighbors.

One Voice seems loaded with personalities from the Aquino years, some recycled from the Black and White Movement. But it may be that they're too engrossed with saving the Cory Constitution, which was a direct reaction to the Marcos regime, but not as earnest as saving the nation from stagnation.

This Monday, Philippine Export Zone Authority director general Lilia de Lima will receive a singular honor from the Japanese emperor when she becomes the very first Filipino to be decorated with Japan's Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star. It will be conferred at the residence of Ambassador Ryuchiro Yamazaki. The historic award, Japan's first, was established in 1875 and is conferred bi-annually upon foreigners "who have made notable contributions to enhance bilateral relations." De Lima is being recognized for the "distinguished services she has been making to encourage investments by Japanese enterprises." As required of any foreign decoration, Congress gave its consent last July 2005-2007.

May 31 for De Lima to accept the award. Since Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso formally notified her last April 29, congratulatory messages have poured from various Japanese firms, including the giants of Japanese industry. The honor is very richly deserved by this lady lawyer who has steered Peza for many years now. She brings great honor to our country. Congratulations, Lilia!

While one Filipino is being honored, another one is being unjustly treated by the Comelec's First Division, headed by Commissioner Resurrection Borrà. Recently, the First Division reversed the decision of Judge Arturo Bernardo of the Gapan City Regional Trial Court, upholding the victory of the multi-awarded, second-term mayor of San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, Sonia R. Lorenzo. The public school teachers who testified in court affirmed that the elections were clean and honest and that the returns they prepared reflected the true count. But these were ignored by the First Division. One can only hope that the Comelec en banc will set things right.

Ironically, Lorenzo is being removed at a time when her honest and efficient administration has drawn many projects of big-time institutions to San Isidro. Surely these projects wouldn't have been drawn there if her poll victory was anomalous. The future of these projects is uncertain and the townspeople could be the losers. Among them are the Ateneo Center for Educational Development, which seeks to uplift the quality of public education there, the Gawad Kalinga which has made it the model for Central Luzon, the R-Isreal Center for Agricultural Training, one of two such centers in Region 3 that seeks to facilitate technology transfer. San Isidro, with Lorenzo at the helm, received the presidential award for best performing LGU against illegal drugs, and the national award from the League of Municipalities for innovative approaches to health care delivery. She was also recognized as the most outstanding mayor by the province in 2003 and this year. She was the only local executive among the seven AIM-Mirant Bridging Leadership Fellows from July 2005-2007.

Wining and dining

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



which dish, beyond the formula of "white with seafood and red with meat."

Still, I can count a few memorable wine "moments," including two in which Shiraz, a grape variety that grows in Australia, figures prominently. The first was in San Francisco while I was on a six-week fellowship together with three other Filipinos: Rep. Neris Acosta, Bacolod-based journalist Mate Espina and reproductive health advocate Dr. Junice Melgar. We had decided to pool our money for dinner and the congressman volunteered to cook adobo, which we instantly dubbed his "pork barrel adobo." Trawling the aisles of a gourmet market for wine, I stumbled upon a bottle of Shiraz, which I had read about, and recommended we try it. It was a propitious choice. The mellow, fruity Shiraz complemented the adobo perfectly and we finished the bottle without trouble.

A year or so later, I was in Singapore with a few friends to watch our common friend Bart Gunonga in a play. On our last day, we met at a fast-food outlet and Guido Delgado, who fancies himself a wine connoisseur, brought out a bottle of a prize-winning Shiraz vintage, which he said he had found through the Internet. We committed the mortal sin of drinking the wine from plastic cups, but even in plastic cups amid the mundane and noisy setting of a basement outlet, the wine transported us out of our dreary reality.

TRANSPORTING indeed was the "Torres Wine Dinner" held at Segundo Piso Bistro (roughly, second-floor bistro) of Terry's Selection along Pasong Tamo Extension in Makati. A Viva Esmeralda Moscatel-Gewurztraminer

2005, a delicate white wine that barely left traces on the tongue, accompanied the appetizers, ranging from wontons stuffed with seafood mousse, bechamel croquettes and baguette rounds with la la bean puree and Cataluna sausage.

The chilled Andalusian tomato soup and pasta course was accompanied by Gran Vina Sol Chardonnay 2004, another white of heavier flavor. Strangely enough, the next course, codfish medallions in pepper sauce, was accompanied not by a white wine but by Manso de Velasco Cabernet Sauvignon 2001, which complemented (and did not overwhelm as conventional wisdom says) the fish. A Marimar Pinot Noir 2001, my personal favorite among the wines served that evening, was served along with the chicken dish simmered in Pinot Noir sauce, while a fuller-bodied Mas la Plana Cabernet Sauvignon 2002 was served alongside the cheese. The long and filling dinner was capped with dessert of gingerbread on a Moscato Sabayon, with Moscato de Oro providing the right sweet ending. There was Jaime Reserva de Familia Brandy to follow, but by this time all of us on our table were too knackered for any more alcohol.

JOINING us briefly was Miguel Torres Maciaszek, a third-generation family member who, while not trained in oenology, learned the art of wine appreciation at the family dining table and is now part of the Torres Wines marketing concern.

While based in Barcelona and environs, Torres Wines sources its grapes not just from its own vineyards, including a winery in Sonoma, California, managed by Miguel's sister Marimar, but also from all around the world. While their biggest selling products in the Philippines are still the brandies, he says sales of red wine have been climbing steadily here, with sales exhibiting an impressive 50-percent rise. The local distributor of Torres Wines is ATR-Torres Wines and Spirits, with main office in San Pablo City.

With the help of Torres Wines and promotional activities like that dinner, we may yet further our education in wines!

Is 'Eurabia' inevitable?

WORLD VIEW

Mai Yamani

that exist between the mechanics of a modern free society and the sense of a vast conspiracy against Muslims. This has led to a schism between the hopes young Muslims have for successful lives in the West and their aspirations for their Muslim brothers and sisters, who have suffered so many terrible disappointments.

As young Muslims in Britain (and across the West) try to maneuver between the various, and often conflicting, aspects of their identity, three clear tendencies have emerged:

* A secular and pragmatic response, which makes Islam a private matter

* A conservative stance that reconciles cultural, religious and familial ties with "Britishness."

* A radical response to the perceived collision between the foreign policies of their new homelands and the welfare of the Islamic world

Messianic waves from the Middle East, reaching both schools and mosques, help draw young Muslims into radicalism. One such wave is created by the hardline Saudi/Wahhabi education system, which is based on the concept of *al-wala' wa al-bara'*, loyalty to the system and hostility to the infidels. This curriculum, exported Westward by fatwa subsidies, is heavily punctuated with denunciations of the infidels and calls to jihad. Designed to secure the legitimacy of the Saudi monarchy at home, it is indoctrinating young Western Muslims with values antithetical to open and free societies.

Britain's government is beginning to recognize the danger, and is trying to clamp down on schools and mosques that spread hate. Unfortunately, such repression has been merely reactive and shortsighted, with no clear long-term vision about the nature of Islamic education in the West.

Access to the Internet, satellite television and travel is drawing these young Muslims into a community that shares their vision and their rage. So technology is heightening the tensions

thus, it merely feeds young Muslims' fears that they are being singled out for persecution.

One difficulty with the British government's response is that it classifies all Muslims as just that: Muslim. By defining people on the basis of their religion, nuances—or national identity or of the degree of orthodoxy—are lost. This plays into the hands of radicals, because it makes Islam the central element of identity.

Islamic radicalization and terror need no continue to flourish in the West. Regardless of their disappointment with the Western countries' foreign policy, young Muslims have been exposed to their undeniable democratic spirit. They may now seek a deeper connection to their Muslim identity, but, having learned to question authority, they are unlikely to accept rigid parental or Islamic traditions. Like other young people around them, they want to be the agents of their own destiny.

This desire is changing Islam, especially in the West. The basic texts remain the same, but their interpretation, and the application of religion in people's lives, have not. Young Muslims, particularly in the West, are setting an example that is slowly being echoed in the Middle East, despite massive state repression.

The task for Western policymakers is to recognize the interconnection of foreign and domestic policies. They must become serious about backing legitimate democratic representation in Muslim countries, for only then will Western policy seem less hypocritical. They must also ensure that career choices are as open to their Muslim citizens as they are to everyone else.

In short, young Muslims in the West need to believe that democratic principles are respected abroad and applied equally at home. Only when such a belief becomes general will despair stop fueling terrorism, and suicide bombing come to be viewed as an obscene calling. Project Syndicate

Mai Yamani is the author of "Cradle of Islam" and a senior research fellow at Chatham House, the Royal Institute of Economic Affairs.

'Noli me tangere'

I HAVE ALWAYS HAD A STRANGE RELATIONSHIP WITH Jose Rizal and his works. As a Filipino-American who migrated to the United States at the age of 9, I never had to read and study "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo," as did many of my contemporaries who were educated in the Philippines. But like the stamp of my identity, like my almond-shaped eyes and tanned skin, I have always carried the ghost of Rizal with me, especially because of my first name. Everywhere I go, educated Filipinos would ask, "Hey, Basti, where's Crispin?"

And for most of my life, I only had a vague idea of what they were talking about because I had not read Rizal's works, although I was aware that his writings played a significant role in my homeland's struggle for independence.

It wasn't until I was 27 and a graduate student that I finally picked up "Noli Me Tangere" and plunged into it, plumb-ing my identity as an "exiled" Filipino. That led me to a discovery that revealed more to me about myself, the land where I came from and the brilliance of my countrymen.

Even as a child, I knew (thanks to my curiosity about this strangely titled book sitting on my parents' bookshelf) that the popular translation of "Noli Me Tangere" was "Touch Me Not." I always thought it was an odd title for a book of its repute, for what did a command not to be touched have to do with Philippine independence? I also found it strange that the title did not sound Filipino, or even Spanish (which many people I knew believed it was). I assumed that if I read the book, I would know why Rizal chose this title.

Reading "Noli," however, I could not find any overt reference that would give its exact meaning. When I discussed this with my parents and my contemporaries, I learned that Filipinos are often taught that "touch me not" was a request from Filipinos to their Spanish colonial masters to "leave them be" or to stop abusing our people. But this sounded too simplistic to me. For if it was meant as a request to be left alone, why did Rizal choose to put it this way and in a strange language?

In the introduction to his English translation of Rizal's book, Leon Maria Guerrero offers another explanation. "Touch Me Not" refers to the Spanish religious orders of the time, who were considered invincible and "untouchable," and whose despotic and corrupt practices were the principal target of the book. This explanation I also found inadequate. I felt it did not go deep enough into the heart of the matter.

In graduate school, I finally decided to get to the bottom of this mystery. On the Internet, the first thing I discovered was that "noli me tangere" was not something that was unique to Philippine history. It is Latin, and it can be found in the Bible in John 20:17: "Noli me tangere," Jesus tells Mary Magdalene upon her discovery of His resurrected body, following His crucifixion and burial. It is a dramatic moment, captured by many paintings over the centuries that bear the injunction as their title.

I also found out the meaning of "noli me tangere" has never been precisely defined, and that it has been the subject of debate among Christian theologians and scholars for hundreds of years. One eminent theologian, Fr. Raymond Edward Brown, has counted at least 11 different interpretations given by various scholars.

Some said Jesus' wounds were still sore, and so He asked not to be touched to be spared the pain. Others believed that Jesus was admonishing Mary Magdalene not to look for physical proof that He was alive but instead to have faith in His Resurrection. But among the many different interpretations identified by Brown, the most plausible, to me, was the one advanced by St. John Chrysostom, bishop of Antioch in the 4th and 5th centuries. St. John said that when Jesus uttered those words, He was asking for respect. St. John believed that Jesus was saying, "Approach Me not as you did before, for matters are not in the same state, nor shall I henceforth be with you in the same way."

When I read St. John I had a eureka moment. I felt sure that this was what Rizal intended to say when he gave his novel the title, "Noli Me Tangere," not only because of its relevance to the Filipinos' relationship with their colonial masters, but also because the name of "Noli's" hero, Juan Crisostomo Ibarra, has an uncanny similarity to St. John Chrysostom's. Moreover, St. John was known to have openly criticized the Church and the government of his time, denouncing their corruption and excesses. ("Chrysostom" is Greek for "golden-mouthed," a name given to the bishop because of his reputation as a great orator and speaker of the truth.) And he was severely punished for his views by being banished and exiled. The parallels between the experiences of St. John and Ibarra cannot be mere coincidence.

This discovery about the title of his book, our national treasure, underscored for me the brilliance of Jose Rizal, and made me proud to be a Filipino. It showed that long before the age of the Internet and advanced information technology, Rizal was a scholar who had studied the writings of a 5th-century bishop whom very few people know, both in the Philippines and in the United States. Rizal even directly quotes the saint in the last chapter of his other masterpiece, "El Filibusterismo."

I have observed that we Filipinos often put ourselves down. We seem to believe that we are inferior to other peoples, especially the Americans and Europeans. Whenever I return to my homeland, I am assailed by billboards featuring actors and models who don't look like the Filipinos walking in the street, and by products like skin whiteners that are an affront to people like me who have the benefit of living in a society that teaches that all people are equal, no matter the color of our skin. Even in the United States, where Filipinos are the second largest Asian immigrant group, we do our best to be unobtrusive and barely recognizable by other Americans. We are often mistaken for Chinese, Koreans or Vietnamese, because we try to discard our culture quickly and assimilate with other groups, hoping we can get rid of our "flaws" and imbibe the "superior" aspects of other cultures.

Jose Rizal was a great man. He was of slight stature and had almond eyes, a wide nose and brown skin. Once he wrote, referring to the virtues of justice, law and reason, that "it is useless to answer certain objections of some fine writers regarding the rather brown skins and faces with somewhat wide nostrils . . . Law has no skin nor Reason, nostrils." Let us honor him by remembering his fine example and taking with pride our rightful place in the world, knowing that we are a gifted and beautiful people.

Basilio I. Valdezuela, 28, recently graduated from New York University with a master of science degree in Global Affairs.

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Poro Pt. casino opens; Church aghast

By Peter La. Julian
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**SAN FERNANDO CITY—A CASINO OPENED AT the Poro Point discreetly, ignoring opposition from Church leaders in La Union.**

The Poro Point Fiesta Casino opened without fanfare on May 2 amid opposition from the La Union clergy and other sectors.

The facility, which is part of the Poro Point and Tourism Complex inside the 68-hectare Poro Point

Special Economic and Freeport Zone (PPSFZ), houses 100 slot machines and several gambling tables for baccarat and Pai Gow, a Chinese card game similar to the Filipino "pusoy."

The tourism complex includes

a first-class restaurant, which is near the casino.

From here, the visitor gets a good view of the surrounding area as the strip of land on which it is built juts into the South China Sea.

The casino starts business at noon and ends operations at 6 a.m.

Since its opening, the casino has attracted high rollers not only from the province but from Pangasinan, Ilocos Sur and Baguio City.

But local executives, businessmen, officials and employees of government agencies based in

this city are starting to patronize the casino.

Operated by Thunderbird Resorts Inc., a US-based firm that reportedly invested P1.3 billion in the venture, the casino and the resort facility employs about 300 workers.

Thunderbird, which operates 12 gaming businesses in five Latin American countries, also owns the Fiesta Casino and Resort in Rizal.

Bishop Artemio Villera, of the Diocese of San Fernando,

claimed the casino operation.

Villera said it would only spawn "untold evils" like prostitution, drug abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, crimes like robbery and the destruction of family values.

There can never be a justification for promoting gambling under the pretext of generating jobs for the unemployed," he said, echoing the pastoral letter issued by the diocese last year.

Villera said progress could be achieved in other areas that need

to be explored "for the sake of providing job opportunities and uplifting the living conditions of the poor."

He lamented that the operation of the casino proceeded despite his meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang last year seeking to stop its operation.

The INQUIRER, since last week, tried but failed to contact officials of the Poro Point Management Corp., which manages the PPSR-FZ, for comment.

Controversy-ridden coal power plant splits townsfolk

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Bureau**MASINLOC, ZAMBALES—“WE made an asset inventory,” said one of two Asian-looking executives as they hailed past two flights of stairs at the administration building of the Masinloc Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant (MCFTPP) here on Thursday.**

“We’re from Ranhill,” the other executive snapped back, referring to the Malaysian company Ranhill Berhad.

That was all that they wanted to say in a chance meeting with the INQUIRER. They both clammed up, clutched their hard hats and walked away, begging not to speak on the controversy that has gotten Ranhill’s partner, the YNN Pacific Consortium, into a mess when it won the bid to buy for \$562 million (P29.89 billion) the 600-megawatt (MW) facility that they just inspected.

Ranhil, obviously, did not back out from doing an accounting of the power plant’s assets even as the day before that, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan filed a graft case against six Cabinet members sitting in the board of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM).

PSALM supervised the bidding of the biggest asset that the government placed on the auction block in 2004.

In another room, an engineer who has worked at the MCFTPP since the state-owned National Power Corp. (Napocor) commissioned this in 1998 viewed the Ranhill team’s arrival as an indication there really was a “potential buyer at last.”

YNN, as far as that engineer could remember, has never sent out a representative to check the facility before or after it won the bid in December 2004.

Residents split

Divided in 1993 on what to make of the MCFTPP, the people are torn again, this time about the project’s future.

Some want to see it closed while others do not care who takes over as long as it does the work clean.

Andrew Edillon, who lives some 500 meters from the power plant, wished that the buyer would relocate the facility elsewhere.

“I shouldn’t be here. Over the years, the smell it emits has turned foul. It’s been causing us headaches, stomachaches, difficult breathing and dry throats. Oh some days, it lets out fine ash that’s itchy on the skin,” said Edillon, 35, a fisherman.

He said those incidents happened when one of the turbines poured out black smoke or when the coal stacked near the conveyor were not sprayed with water.

Edillon is worried about the health of his wife, Generous, who is pregnant with their first child. Generous said her neighbors suspected that several cases of spontaneous abortion among women in the village were due to exposure to the ash and the smell.

Leonardo Doma, Banig barangay captain, confirmed the complaints and said Mayor Jessu Edora went to the point of lending the management of MCFTPP a bulldozer to gather and dispose of the ash.

“My people were poised to stage a rally on June 12 but we decided to let the mayor act in the meantime,” Doma said.

He likened the odor coming out of the plant to “a rotten egg or a burning rubber tire.”

Edillon complained that the power plant has been throwing used oil on Masinloc Bay. This, he said, was why the fish catch has declined to

**BLACK SMOKE** comes out of the coal-fired Masinloc plant, an indication of the problems it faces from environment groups and the controversy that currently envelops it over alleged bidding irregularities.

PHOTO FROM GREENPEACE

five to 10 kg daily. To cope, fishermen venture out to other municipal waters or sail out three a day.

Elvio Flores, MCFTPP manager, said the ash escaped the holding area only once when a baby tornado hit the area in May and blew the fine particles in the di-

ments from among the residents.

“Our operations have caused no adverse effects on their health,” he said.

Doma could not confirm this, but said many residents have been observed to be suffering from respiratory ailments or skin problems. A

This, the sources said, was obvious because until now and despite the deadline of Dec. 2, 2005 and the first extension on March 31, 2006, YNN has not paid the upfront fee of \$227 million, which is at least 40 percent of the bid price.

Although YNN’s first partner, the Australian Great Pacific Financial Corp., had backed out and YNN failed to deliver the payment, PSALM did not forfeit the \$11.2 million performance bond and gave it another extension to pay on June 30.

Then came Ranhill

According to Napocor sources, PSALM president Nieves Osorio “probably never thought that the takeover of Ranhill from the Great Pacific was not sanctioned by PSALM’s own bidding rules.”

Ranhil, they claimed, changed the terms of the sale of MCFTPP, a plant that supplied the Luzon grid and not any contract in particular.

Ranhil did that, they said, by inserting a condition in the deal asking the government to get the MCFTPP a supply contract with the Lopez family-owned Manila Electric Corp. (Meralco).

“The government is incapable of conducting regular and judicious bidding process,” the sources said of what the Masinloc privatization deal demonstrated to the local and international business communities.

Ties

Napocor sources said Energy Regulatory Commissioner Jesus Alcordo played a role in how YNN got the deal.

Alcordo used to be president of the Duracom Mobile Power Corp., whose chair was Filipino-Chinese businessman Sunny Sun who also heads the YNN.

Alcordo’s company, East Asia Power, was said to have also paid \$3 million in “success fees” to Sun’s YNN Holdings Corp. when it obtained a Meralco contract for East Asia Power’s barges in Navotas.

Alcordo had said he had divested his interests in those companies when he joined the ERC.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla, one of the respondents in the graft case, defended the sale, saying it was “transparent and fully in accordance with the law.”

Flores said it was better to see the MCFTPP in a private company’s hands.

rection of the village.

Explaining the bad smell, he said this happens when the coal undergoes spontaneous combustion when exposed to the heat of the sun.

He admitted that the ash holding area had “some problems” with its air compressors. These, he said, had been repaired.

The plant burns 5,000 tons of coal daily and keeps a buffer stock of 150,000 tons monthly.

He said the MCFTPP gets its coal either from Australia or China.

The environmental group Greenpeace said samples gathered for a 2002 study showed that ash found at Masinloc as well as two other coal-fired plants was “contaminated with a range of toxic and potentially toxic elements, including arsenic, chromium, lead and mercury.”

Flores said the monitoring stations around the plant showed good air quality. Medical missions done in communities around the facility detected no serious ail-

health survey, she said, was needed to really identify the cause of sickness among her constituents.

The economic benefits of hosting the power plant are limited, she said, with only less than 100 residents there working mostly as janitors.

Doma could not say how much the village gets as share of franchise tax.

The Tambansang Kihusang ng Makabayang Magbubukid in Zambales has demanded the closure of the plant.

Danilo Alejandro, the group’s chair, said it should have never been operated near a populated area in the first place.

Wrong things

Beyond the issues of health, public safety and environment, Napocor sources cited a lot of wrong things about YNN’s cornering of the Masinloc deal.

For one, the PSALM sold it to the YNN that “did not have funds of its own.”

ROUNDUP

Quake drill commended**SAN PABLO CITY—The National Transmission Corp.-South Luzon Operations and Maintenance (Transco-Sion) has commended the successful holding of an earthquake drill in this city. Anna Katrina Nava, of the Transco-Sion Corporate Affairs Office, who witnessed the drill, said the whole process was well coordinated among the departments occupying the city hall building.***Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***Student slain over cell phone****COTABATO CITY—A college student was shot dead inside the “Lukay-Lukay” section of the Megamarket here by an unidentified man, who fled with the victim’s cell phone on Tuesday noon. Sam Mundas, market administrator said Hana Hamsay, 18, was on the second floor of the market when the suspect approached her and grabbed her cell phone. Mundas said the victim refused to let go of her cell phone. “Sensing that the commotion was drawing more people to the scene, the suspect pulled a handgun and shot the victim,” said Mundas, quoting witnesses.***Charlie C. Sefasa, PDI Mindanao Bureau***NBI to sue Bacolod bar****BACOLOD CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation is filing charges against the owners of a Bacolod bar for the alleged employment of a minor as a sex worker. NBI Bacolod chief Phillip Peccache said charges would be filed against the owners of the Diamond Angels Bar in Bacolod City for violation of the Qualified Trafficking in Persons Law and the Anti-Child Abuse Law. Peccache said NBI forces from Cebu and Bacolod, with representatives of the Department of Social Services and Development and the Department of Labor and Employment, raided the bar on Wednesday night, arrested the manager and rescued nine females working there, one of whom was later found to be a minor.***Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau***4 more medicine scholars****DUJAGUE CITY—The provincial government of Negros Oriental has announced it is adding four more scholars to study medicine this year at the Iligan State University here. The medical scholarship program was initiated by the provincial government last year in a bid to stop the exodus of doctors for higher paying jobs abroad. This brings to eight the number of provincial government scholars who are taking up the course since last year. Provincial Treasurer Danilo Mendez, a member of the integrated Scholarship Program Committee, said the scholarship grant includes free tuition, a P2,500 monthly allowance and free rooms or lodgings at the provincial government’s aqua center.***Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau***REKINDLING TIES****US Ambassador Kristie Kenney and Olongapo Mayor James Gordon Jr. meet in Olongapo City to discuss the city’s recovery following the removal of US bases in Subic. In Subic, photo from Gordon office****MGA DIABETIKO**

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INQUIRER Visayas

Wonders never cease from Samar nature

By Vicente S. Labro
Basey, Samar

THREE SEEMS TO BE no shortage of natural wonders on Samar Island that new eco-tourism sites would rise almost every year to accommodate nature lovers and adventure seekers who want to relish nature's want.

Last summer, a mountain resort operated by the local farmers' community was inaugurated in Basey and this immediately caught the attention of nature lovers. Located about 20 kilometers from the Basey town proper, the new place boasts of a tranquil and cool atmosphere beneath tall trees and beside a stream whose clear water comes from a waterfall. And it is being run by a group of villagers.

Since its opening last April, the resort has attracted a host of people who came either to just be in touch with nature or to enjoy their excursions or picnics amid the stately trees, the cool stream and the marvellous Balantac Falls.

With many people already coming to the resort, the management has given an assurance that they would never allow the place to lose its natural grandeur. In fact, their foremost concern is to protect and conserve the environment even as they continue to attract excursionists and tourists into this nature resort.

"Actually we did not plan to open the place this early, but people just kept on coming that we have no choice but to accommodate them," said Nelson Abada, member of the board director of Rawis Community-based Resource Management Association (RCRMA), referring to the newly opened 6-hectare Balantac Resort.

According to Abada, Samar Gov. Milagrosa T. Tan provided a funding of over P1 million for the initial development of Balantac Resort. The municipal government, headed by



A DIP in a natural pool at the Balantac Resort is a welcome respite on hot days.

Mayor Vic Labuac, initiated the release of funds for the mountain resort, he added.

Tan and some provincial and municipal officials attended the inauguration of the resort's Phase 1 last April 19 and since then, Abada said, people have kept on coming to the RCRMA-managed Balantac Resort.

Minimal fees, future plans

Though the construction of their single and duplex cottages is not yet finished, and they still lack guest cabanas, beddings and electricity, the resort is now operating regularly, charging an entrance fee of P5 for each child and P10 for an adult, and a kiosk rental of P100.

Guests would fill all of the resort's 14 kiosks, especially during weekends, that some of the visitors would just have their picnics on grassy spots beneath the trees.

Abada said visitors could also hold seminars and even stay overnight at the resort's two-story Tourism Center, where native products are also displayed for sale.

The Tourism Center, kiosks, and the unfinished cottages are all made of native materials. The kiosks line both sides of the stream, from near the waterfall upstream down to the

lower level where a big man-made pool is located. The latter is a favorite of visitors who want to splash and swim in the cool, spring water.

Abada said they would continue developing the Balantac Resort. In fact, he added, they plan to put up a camping site on a grassy clearing near the trees and across the stream, to put up a "green area" planted with vegetables and ornamental plants, and to construct a 1.5-km pathway leading to two unexplored caves and a hot spring.

"All these will help in the promotion of environmental awareness to our visitors," he said, referring to their planned projects.

The problem, however, is funding for the next phases of their development project. "We already spent a part of the association's money during the first phase of the project and we need to replenish that first before we can finance other projects," he said.

Abada, however, made it clear that the RCRMA is managing the mountain resort not just for income but more importantly, to preserve and protect the environment. He emphasized that natural resources are perishable and even irreplaceable once lost that they would do

their best to safeguard the place.

The venture

The RCRMA was organized in 2000 with 76 members, both males and females, coming from Sitio Rawis, Barangay Gurang, Basey town. Their first venture, he said, was a 246-hectare agro-forestry project in Rawis. They had a coffee plantation and had availed of the government's carabao dispersal program.

According to Abada, it was in the 1960s or 1970s when logging firms were still operating in the area that the Balantac Resort was initially developed as a mountain resort where

boasts of unspoiled and exquisite stalactite and stalagmite formations.

But some residents of Sitio Rawis had decided to manage their natural resources by themselves. In a public consultation about the cave, they voted overwhelmingly against the plan to declare the cave a protected area, for this would mean that the management of the cave would fall on the government through a protected area management board.

The RCRMA now manages both the cave and the mountain resort, and they share the income derived from entrance and other fees with the municipal government.



ANOTHER breather from rising temperatures is a man-made pool in Balantac.

logging officials could relax.

Last year, some municipal officials and RCRMA members hatched the idea of redeveloping the place.

Balantac Resort became the second eco-adventure tourist undertaking of the village association, after the Rawis Cave. The cave could be reached from the town proper of Basey by a one-hour motorboat ride along the Golden River of Basey to Sitio Rawis. Its main entrance is located just about 600 meters away from Sitio Rawis.

Years ago, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional office based in Tacloban City wanted the Rawis Cave to become a protected area. The cave

Rawis is located about 3 km downhill from Balantac Resort. In the 1960s until the 1980s the village had served as a campsite of one of the big logging firms operating then in Samar. Logging operations in the area ceased in 1989 when the government declared a moratorium on the cutting of trees on the whole Samar Island.

About 600 meters from the Rawis village proper is the entrance of the Rawis Cave. Despite the cave being near a logging campsite, only a few people dared explore the cave and this was already in the 1990s.

Villagers believe that supernatural beings inhabit the cave. According to some of the locals, early residents of

Rawis saw a "bulalok" or a burning meteorite fall from the skies and soar along the Golden River before finally entering the cave. Since that incident no one dared come close to the cave until the early 1990s.

But if there's something strange inside the cave, it's about how nature was able to mold those beautiful and gleaming stalagmites and stalactites that are of different shapes and sizes.

Buminado Duran, popularly known as Mano Lume, 59, is one of the guides available to those who want to explore the Rawis Cave. Before entering the cave, Mano Lume would first knock on the wall to announce the group's arrival. Then he would offer sort of prayer for the "unseen dwellers" of Rawis Cave.

The first things that cave explorers would notice inside the Rawis Cave, however, are the bats. There are of two kinds of bats in the cave, the tiny bats and the larger ones. The small bats occupy some small holes on the cave ceiling while the larger ones hang upside down, also from the ceiling.

Mano Lume revealed that thousands of bats occupy another cave not far from Rawis. This bat cave was featured in a TV show, together with another nearby cave that is occupied by hundreds of snakes.

After meeting the bats, Mano Lume would lead the explorers to the underground wonders of Rawis Cave. The formations found inside the cave include a giant stalactite, a "picture frame," a statue of the Virgin Mary, a natural bathtub, and a statue of the Madonna. Other formations resemble a miniature of the rice terraces and of the Great Wall of China. There are also plenty of cave pearls inside Rawis Cave, and this shows that the cavern is in pristine condition.

Already, many people, including foreigners, have already visited Rawis Cave. Some of them said the boat ride along the snaking Golden River of Basey was already an experience by itself, and that the trek inside Rawis Cave was an ultimate experience.

The town of Basey, however, is more popular as the site of the 840-hectare Sogoton Natural Bridge National Park, which is located about 5 km upstream of Sitio Rawis.

Drama in reality TV makes presence felt in institute

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

IF "PINNOY BIG BROTHER (PBB)," a reality TV show, had its teen edition, so did the annual creative writing workshop at the University of San Agustin's Fray Luis de Leon Creative Writing Institute in Iloilo City.

Nine fellows, aged 13 to 25, but the majority of them high school students, were grilled by noted writers from Western Visayas, who subjected every poem and short story they submitted to close reading and comments—some gentle, some cruel but always helpful.

As in any writing workshops, egos were crushed and years of bad English writing smashed. It was a process as stressful as joining PBB.

There were no defensive outbursts and tantrums, although one fellow was seen banging his head on the table, luckily on the cushioned edge, as his poem was being butchered. But he said his mother had warned him of a Simon Cowell among the panelists.

Write in own language

"Write in your own language. A language is an utterance of a civilization. Hiligaynon is not inferior to English," said Palanca Hall of Famer Leoncio Deriada, the lead panelist of the workshop held on May 15-19.

The workshop, now on its fourth year, aims to discover and hone skills of writers in Western Visayas to write in English, Filipino and regional languages, such as Hiligaynon, Aklanon and Kinaray-a.

The sponsoring agency named after the Spanish lyric poet and theologian, wants to be a "friendly and fertile breeding ground" of local writers, said its coordinator, John Iremil Teodoro.

For budding writers, joining writing workshops is one way of recognizing their talents.

This year's fellows were chosen after they have submitted four of their best works, mostly poems, that were printed on handouts without their names to spare them of immediate shame when these dissected for style and grammar flaws.

The fellows: teen edition

The fellows were Hajar Al-Abdullah, Stephanie Keiko Erasurz and Jezelle Nufable, Ateneo de Iloilo; Lawrence Anthony Bernabe, University of the Philippines Visayas; Donita I.M. Fresno, University of San Agustin High School; Prente Sur Meliza, SPED-Integrated School for Exceptional Children; and Arlene Moscaya, Victor Robinson III and

Elesd Togonon, University of San Agustin.

Aside from free attendance to the workshop, the fellows received transportation allowance and free lodging if they are not from Iloilo City. Of the nine, three are college students, five are in high school, and one had just finished Grade 6.

"This batch is the teen edition. Maybe we have already depicted the ranks of adult and older writers in the region," said Teodoro, also a panelist.

The other panelists were also noted for their works in regional languages of West Visayas, in which many were award-winning and published. They are Genevieve Asenyo, Isidoro Cruz and Alice Tan Gonzales.

As panelists, the four were thoughtful and nurturing even as they keenly pointed out the slips in techniques and narrowness of the writer's world.

One-line comments

On the other hand, Deriada, while steely and unforgiving, especially in his one-line comments, was well liked by the fellows because of his repertoire of anecdotes, English language booboo and tales of "aswang" and "kapre."

The last of the five-day workshops was the much-awaited part because medals and books were given away to the best works produced. The poetry contest has categories in English, Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a.

The winning pieces were read because, as Deriada said, the poems have to be liberated from their printed form.

The occasion was also the launch of the books of two Kinaray-a poets, Genevieve Asenyo and Maria Milagros Geremua Lachua.

Asenyo's book, "Pula ang Kulay ng Text Message," is a collection of poems in Kinaray-a and Filipino, while Geremua-Lachua's "Ang Pag-ubat Bay," is a book of Kinaray-a poems with English translations.

The two were first winners of Fray Luis de Leon Creative Writing Grants established last year to inspire and encourage production of literary works in Western Visayas. The grant comes with P10,000 and the completed manuscript is published by the university with the label "Libro Agusino."

Impoverish writers

"We know very well that there is no money in writing. Writers have to work—they teach, they farm, they do PR, they sell things in the market and some even direct beauty contests in order to eat and live decently," said Teodoro.

He said the grant was a modest amount, but it would be a "force enough to make that writer produce her of his masterpieces..."

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Special PROJECT**93rd UP General Alumni-Faculty Homecoming & Reunion****UP: Usbong ng Pag-Asa**

June 24, 2006 4 p.m. Ang Bahay ng Alumni



My warmest greetings to the University of the Philippines Alumni Association as you hold the UP General Alumni-Faculty Homecoming and Reunion.

Your theme, "Population and Environment," indicates that you are truly attuned to the needs of the times as you convene to discuss the impact of population and environmental issues in our national life. It also gives credence to our government's reform thrusts along the same critical issues.

As the bastion of academic freedom in the country, the University of the Philippines has always been known for its culture of educational excellence and its social commitment to breed future leaders of our country who are dedicated and progressive. As you rekindle the bonds that bind you to this great institution, be always reminded of our pivotal role to contribute to the public good and to the nation as a whole an advocacy which was instilled in each of us during our university years.

May you remain true to the ideals of your alma mater even as it is my fervent hope that you will support our vision to beat the odds and attain a better life for our people.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
President
Republic of the Philippines

I would like to welcome you all to the Grand Alumni Homecoming and Reunion.

The Homecoming is not only a time for us to celebrate, renew old ties and reminisce about the good old days, it is also a time for us to stop and take a look at how the University is doing.

It is you, the alumni, that show us the real state of the University. The careers you have chosen, the quality of the lives you lead are partly reflections of a UP education. And looking at you all tonight, the fine roster that includes some of the best in the sciences, the arts, business, government and the

academe, we can say that we must be doing something right.

That being said, we need to harness our collective talent and address pressing issues our nation faces today. Population and the environment are certainly matters of great concern. The continuing degradation of our natural environment, the steady depletion of natural resources, and the rise in population which means an even smaller resource allocation per person, put us all in a difficult position. Difficult, but not impossible. One thing a UP education shows us that we can find a way.

Taking up the theme of population and environment this year shows the UP alumni's commitment to this cause and with our combined efforts, we will make a difference. We have been taught to serve our nation, and so we shall.

Maraming salamat at mahabang kringy labat!

EMERLINDA R. ROMAN
President
University of the Philippines

Homecomings and reunions almost always evoke good memories of our lives as students - how we survived the "terrors" in the faculty of the University how clear and clean the UP lagoon was, how fresh the air we breathed in then, how we heard daily the melodies produced by the UP Cardillao and many more.

This year's homecoming theme, "Population and Environment" is the fourth of a series of population-related issues that have come to the fore. We have focused on "Population and the Quality of Life of the Filipino" (2003), "Population and Education" (2004) and "The Filipino Diaspora" (2005).

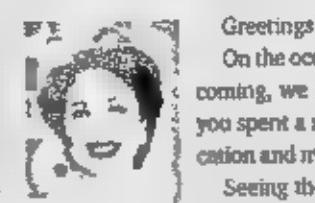
Recently, the attention of people to the world over are riveted on environment-related disasters such as the havoc that typhoon Ketsana caused in the United States, the massive landslide in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte, the bird flu epidemic that beset a number of countries, and others. The Philippines is among the countries that implement environment laws aimed at reducing en-

vironmental stresses on people's lives and promoting ecosystem vitality and sound natural resource management. The University and its alumni must help the country look for solutions to such problems.

As president of the UPAA, I also enjoin you, my fellow alumnus, to continue supporting our alma mater's vision of a university for the 21st century. It was through our UP education that we are now successful players in our respective fields as evident in tonight's alumni awardees. It is time that we give back to our alma mater. Let us build a legacy for future generations.

Mahabang kringy labat!

JAYME S. DELOS SANTOS
President
University of the Philippines
Alumni Association



Greetings! On the occasion of the UPAA Annual Reunion and Homecoming, we warmly welcome you into the campus where you spent a significant portion of your life earning an education and making lifetime friends and acquaintances.

Seeing the campus after as long will certainly flood you with memories - reliving your youth which is enhanced by the presence of your classmates and familiar faces.

I would like to thank the Chairpersons and members of the Homecoming and Reunion Steering Committee for making this affair truly memorable.

To your Alumni Awardees, Jubilarians and Guests, I wish you all a most enjoyable evening.

Mahabang kringy labat!

GLADYS S.J. TIONGCO
First Vice President & Overall Chair
UPAA Homecoming and Reunion Steering Committee

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From left, Rebecca Rellosa, Atty. Gladys Tiongco, Ida Vargas, Nini Jorge, Solina Iglesias, Leon Arceo, Atty. Renato Corpuz, Prof. Marita Hernandez, Regent Jaime de los Santos, Rey Velasco, Evelina Escudero, Romeo Gecolea, Gregorio Fernandez, Ruth Carpio, Annie Guerrero, Dr. Armon Rivera and Angelito Ynigues

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2006 UPAA AWARDEES**OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL AWARDEES**

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Prof. Antonio O. Mabesa, BSA'56



Female Category
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Agriculture
Dr. Arsenio N. Resurrección, BSAE'71, MS'78



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Percy J. Aranador, BS'81



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Victor B. Valdepeñas, BSF'66, MA (Eco)'69



Education
Dr. Lina B. Diaz de Rivera, MAT'76, PhD'91



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Dr. Ernesto P. Sonido, BSE'50



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Nursing
Dr. Carmencita Matua-Abaquin, GNS'62; BSN'69; MN'75; PhD'00



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Gov. Salvador Zaldívar-Perez, AAS'4; ABS'7, BSFS'58



Public Health
Dr. Nina G. Borzaga, BSPH'75; MD'79

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDEES

National Level:
Engr. Francis Chua
(Ang C. Biao),
BSIE'72



Visayas
Atty. Romeo P. Gerochi, BS'71



UPA Service Awardee
Ms. Olivia Rocha-Aluga,
BM'74



UPA Presidential
Awardee
Amb. Lauro L. Baja, Jr.,
BSJ'60; LLB'60



Male Category
Donald K. Ngwe,
BS (Eco)'06
summa cum laude



Female Category
Cherryl O. Abrigo,
BSChE'06 magna
cum laude

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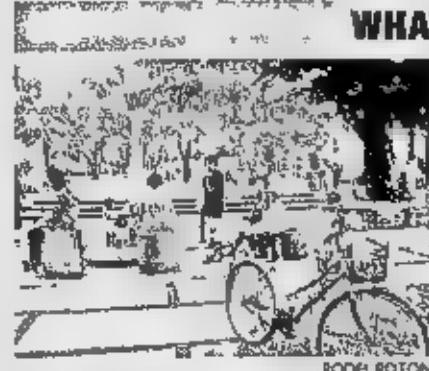
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**WHAT'S INSIDE**

- Slain lawyer's husband was killers' target /A20
- UP students protest Marines presence in QC campus /A20
- Manila's 'redeveloped' parks now open to public /A20



Customs seizes P19-M cargo in Metro, N. Luzon

Participation of insiders eyed

By Leila B. Salaverria

BUREAU OF CUSTOMS AGENTS LAST WEEK seized some P19 million worth of misdeclared used clothing, frozen pork cuts and a shipment of woven fabrics that were illegally diverted from its intended destinations.

The shipment of used clothing, consigned to Hangcor General Merchandise Corp., arrived at the Manila International Container Port (MIPC) from Hong Kong. It was placed in two 40-foot container vans and was declared as a shipment of household tools and compact disc players.

The shipment was intercepted along the Marcos Highway in Benguet. It was believed to be on its way to Baguio City, which has become known for its "ukay ukay" or second-hand clothing stores.

The importation of used clothing is prohibited under Philippine laws.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales yesterday said that the release of questionable shipments from the bureau's custody indicated that some customs personnel could be involved in the illegal activity.

Morales also said he had no problem with questionable shipments being apprehended after they leave the bureau's premises because this way, the BOC would be able to determine who among its personnel were involved in releasing the said shipments.

He said shipments that had been released are usually covered by papers that bear the signatures of the examiners, appraisers and other customs personnel, which means it would be easier to identify those behind the illegal activity.

The shipment of frozen prime pork cuts was also seized at the MIPC. The shipment was declared as frozen squid, but an inspection conducted later showed it contained frozen pork. The BOC said that apart from being misdeclared, the pork shipment was not covered by a permit from the Bureau of Animal Industry.

The P3 million worth of frozen pork was consigned to Vonzik Trading and came from China.

Customs personnel also intercepted a 40-foot container of woven fabrics that was allegedly illegally diverted from its intended destination in Navotas.

According to the BOC, the shipment that had arrived at the Port of Manila was supposed to be brought to a Navotas warehouse. However, customs investigators intercepted it along the North Luzon Expressway.

Customs personnel have not yet determined where the shipment would be taken.

The shipment, worth P6 million, came from China. It was consigned to the Philippine Bonded Warehouse Services Inc.

Munti pays tribute to RP's 1st drug-free community

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ONE DOWN, 200 MORE TO GO.

As part of its all-out war against illegal drugs, the Muntinlupa government will recognize today a small neighborhood in Barangay Alabang, the first community in the country to be declared drug-free, City Hall announced yesterday.

A billboard declaring it a drug-free area will be hung at the entrance of the Highway Homes Subdivision, a village composed of 28 households.

Julie Tarryo, an official of the Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Office, the city government's anti-illegal drugs arm, said it took them two months to confirm that the community was free from illegal drugs.

She said their office studied the profile of the community and its residents, mapped out the area and identified the drug-free homes. Drug users identified in the community were

sent to a rehabilitation center before the community was declared drug-free.

DAPCO officials also conducted seminars for village residents and officers, in addition to creating an assessment team that would help the local government monitor and maintain the community's status as a drug-free area.

However, Tarryo said the assessment team would still need to undergo rigorous training, particularly on intelligence gathering.

Mayor Jaime Fresnedi will lead the awarding of a plaque and the posting of the billboard today to the community, with the help of officials from the Dangerous Drugs Board, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, the Anti-illegal Drugs Special Operation Task Force and the officials of Barangay Alabang.

Fresnedi, however, vowed to make the rest of the city's 200 communities, spread throughout nine barangays, also free from drugs.



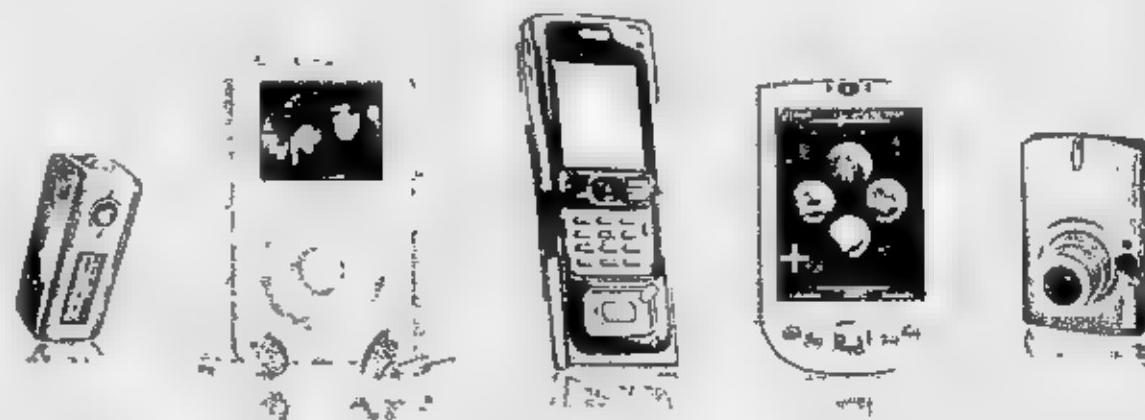
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Manila's 'redeveloped' parks now open to public

By Tina G. Santos

INSTEAD OF HANGING OUT IN malls on weekends, Manila residents can now take their families to three parks which recently underwent extensive renovation after decades of neglect.

The parks are: the Remedios Circle at the Remedios Rotunda, Plaza Salamanca at the corner of T.M. Kalaw and Taft Avenue and Plaza Rueda, located in the southeast corner of Taft Avenue, General Luna and United Nations Avenue.

Named after the Nuestra Señora de los Remedios (Our Lady of Healing) whose image is enshrined in the parish church of Malate, the Remedios Circle had virtually become a no-man's land.

"The park used to be the lair of prostitutes, vagrants and snatchers who often victimized pedestrians and promenaders," said a resident of the once upscale and tranquil residential area that has evolved into a restaurant and fashion row.

During the Spanish era, the Remedios Rotunda had a circular fountain surrounded by nipa-roofed houses and banana

orchards.

Prior to its renovation, huge plant boxes were scattered around an elevated concrete structure that stood in the center of the park. "We removed an elevated open space so people will not only see its charm but we also maximize the use of the space," city engineer Armand Andries said.

The plant boxes were also replaced by landscaped pocket gardens around the circle. Benches were set up in the park while more lights were installed to discourage criminals from hanging out in the area. City officials and residents will gather in the area for a thanksgiving Mass at 7 a.m. today to kick off the celebration of the 435th Araw ng Maynila.

Plaza Salamanca, on the other hand, was named after Dr. Olivia Salamanca, one of the first Filipino women doctors. The third park, Plaza Rueda, was named in honor of Spanish poet Salvador Rueda who visited Manila in 1915. The two parks, with their landscaped grounds, benches and lights, now resemble pocket parks found in exclusive villages in Metro Manila, according to Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.



MALATE habitués will hardly recognize the Remedios Circle after renovations were introduced in the popular landmark.

RODEL ROTONI

Slain lawyer's husband killers' target

By DJ Yap

THE REAL TARGET OF ARMED MEN who killed a woman lawyer and the pastor who had tried to save her could have been the victim's husband.

Evelyn Guballa, who was shot dead with Pastor Joseito Fidel in front of a church on Wednesday night, was married to Arnell Guballa, a ranking official of the Bureau of Internal Revenue who

investigates tax fraud cases, according to the police. Quezon City investigators, however, said they were also looking into "many other angles," and remained tight-lipped about the probe.

Supt. Procopio Lipana, QC Police District criminal investigation division chief, said his men had interviewed Arnell, who heads the BIR's National Investigation Division which monitors persons suspected to be violating the

National Internal Revenue Code. The office also coordinates with the Special Investigation Division on intelligence operations, including those involving smuggling, syndicated crimes and the use of false BIR forms.

Lipana, however, refused to divulge the details of the investigation. He said it was too early to make any conclusions, though he admitted that police were considering the possibility that

the BIR official was the target. "It's hard to speculate at this point. We are looking into many other angles," he said.

Evelyn was gunned down Wednesday evening by two men after a Bible study session at the Full Gospel Pentecostal Church. Fidel died on the spot when he tried to shield her with his body. Guballa was rushed to the hospital, but she died before she could be treated, police said.

METROBRIEFS

5 stores selling tiles raided

POLICE raided yesterday at five stores in Metro Manila suspected of selling smuggled floor tiles. Agents of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group which conducted the operation said the importation of the tiles had defrauded the government of P52 million in unpaid taxes. Simultaneous raids were carried out on the El Mina Floor Center, SJA Floor Center Commonwealth Floor and Libis Floor Center, all in Quezon City and the Cyrus Floor Center in Carmona City. Quoting intelligence information from the Bureau of Customs, the police said investigation showed the floor tiles were illegally imported from China. "Further investigation by CIDG investigators likewise confirmed other illegal transactions committed in cahoots with Customs personnel, brokers and bank personnel from the period October 2005 till February 2006," the police said. "We have search warrants, and we want to seize documents and computer files to show validity of their importation. Our intelligence and investigation conclude that these were all smuggled," said Supt. Benjamin de los Santos, chief of the CIDG's anti-smuggling unit.

Luis A. del Puerto

Brillante vs Binay

A POLITICAL rival of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay has accused the official of using "strong arm tactics" to discourage residents from participating in the signature drive initiated by the Sigaw ng Bayan, a group pushing for charter change. In a statement issued Thursday, Bobby Brillante, former Makati vice mayor, said, "We are deeply concerned over the extent to which Binay would go, even to the point of employing Gestapo-like tactics to prevent people from supporting constitutional change." Brillante said Binay was using Department of Public Safety enforcers "as his private army to carry out acts of harassment and intimidation to dissuade residents from signing up." The mayor, denied Brillante's claims, saying he even allowed Sigaw ng Bayan to hold a motorcade in the city around three months ago to publicize their advocacy.

"So what harassment are they talking about?" Binay said. "This is the problem of the administration's local coordinators who do not know how to cover up their failures in Makati," the mayor added.

Tara V. Quismundo

Why blame businesses for giving to the NPA?

ON
TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

communists. The Bachelor bus company is just a small business. Big businesses are big supporters of the NPA.

In Mindanao, where I come from, sources say Globe and Smart, the country's two largest telecommunications firms, allegedly give hundreds of millions every year to the NPA.

Politicians I've talked with, who asked that they be not identified, admitted they gave money to the NPA so they could campaign in rebel-infested areas.

So why should the government go only after firms and private individuals who give to the NPA? Why not include politicians who also contribute to the NPA?

Manila's 435th year marked today

By Tina G. Santos
and Margaux C. Ortiz

MANILA ADDS YET ANOTHER YEAR to its colorful history as it celebrates its 435th founding anniversary today.

Recognizing the importance of the date, President Macapagal-Arroyo has declared June 24 a special non-working holiday in the city.

Officials have scheduled day-long activities to mark the occasion, starting with a thanksgiving Mass to be held at the Remedios Circle at 7 a.m.

This will be followed by wreath-laying ceremonies at the tomb of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi in San Agustin Church in Intramuros and at the Rajah Sulayman Monument in Malate.

Both lanes of Roxas Boulevard, from Quirino Avenue to Pedro Gil, would be closed to traffic to give way to more festivities from 3 p.m. to 12 midnight, to be capped by a grand fireworks display. As a special treat, the entrance fee at the Manila Zoo would be waived for city residents.

To ensure that the celebration would be orderly, the chief of the Manila Police District has ordered the deployment of additional men and undercover intelligence officers in the city's key areas.



UP STUDENTS stage a protest in front of the Vanguard office in Diliman, Quezon City against the reported presence of Marines on the campus.

UP students protest Marines presence inside QC campus

By Alcuin Papa

MILITANT STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, condemned yesterday the presence of around 20 members of the Philippine Marines inside its campus.

Around 200 students, faculty, and members of the UP community held a demonstration in front of the UP Department of Military Science and Tactics (DMST) compound inside the Diliman campus to condemn the presence of the Marines.

"Outright political repression is

practically knocking on our doors," said Isa Artajo, chair of the Student Alliance for the Advancement of Nationalism and Democracy in UP (STAND-UP).

The militant youth group Anakbayan also expressed concern over the deployment of the Marines inside the campus. The group said it had received a report that the Marines would replace the Special Security Brigade in charge of maintaining "peace and order" inside the campus. An active military presence in the UP portrays a twisted definition of "campus security," it added.

INVITATION TO BID

The AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS) invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties on cash or term basis (minimum 30% down payment and 16% interest rate per annum, maximum of 7 years to pay)

Item No.	Description	Location	Minimum / Floor Price
06-1	269.7 sqm residential lot	No. 12 Rizal St., Proj 2, Q.C.	P 2,428,195.00
06-2	4 residential lots 300 sqm each	Bgy Pimienta, Jimigan, Pangasinan	P 455,855.00
06-3	2 residential lots 500 sqm each	Bgy Pedro, Umingan, Pangasinan	P 243,600.00
06-4	9,448 sqm Industrial Lot	Bulacan Agro Industrial Subdivision Calumpit, Bulacan	P 30,516,700.00
06-5	367 sqm residential lot	L12, B6, Smz De La Paz Subd. Sumulong, Antipolo	P [REDACTED]
06-6	House & Lot F/A 152 sqm L/A 208 sqm	L22, B24, Phase II, Sordier's Hills Subd., Muntinlupa City	P 707,200.00
06-7	3,000 sqm residential lot 13,000 sqm agr lot	Bgy. Canimog, Romblon, Romblon	P 1,538,310.00
06-8	House & Lot F/A 42 sqm L/A 120 sqm	L48 & 47, B4, Alpha Street Northmatrixville Subd. Caloocan	P 509,320.00
06-9	322 sqm residential lot	L70, B1-A Diamond Heights Victoria Homes, Muntinlupa City	P 547,400.00
06-10	House & Lot F/A 142 sqm L/A 134 sqm	Sapang Palay, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan	P 346,239.21
06-11	House & Lot F/A 138 sqm L/A 143 sqm	B7, L3, North Matrixville Camarin Rd., Caloocan City	P [REDACTED]
06-12	House & Lot F/A 818.98 sqm L/A 2,607 sqm	29 Sunflower Dr., Beverly Hills, Taytay, Rizal	P 7,081,592.78
06-14	294 sqm Residential Lot	B3, L8, Flairvest, Bgy Silangan, Capitol, Quezon City	P 1,374,450.00
06-15	278 369 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Sulpit, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-16	188,351 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Malaking Pulo, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-17	106,073 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Dona Jacoba, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-18	35,138 sqm raw land with CARP Exemption	Bgy Suplang, Tanauan, Batangas	P 350.00 / sqm
06-19	450,000 sqm raw land with DAR Conversion	Bgy Batas, Silang, Cavite (beside Riviera Golf & Sports Club)	P 800.00 / sqm
06-20	450,162 sqm raw land with DAR Conversion	Bgy Batas, Silang, Cavite (beside Riviera Golf & Sports Club)	P 800.00 / sqm
06-21	132,189 sqm residential raw land	Bgy Mapaiaid, Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija (near Fort Magsaysay)	P 400 / sqm
06-22	17,996 sqm commercial lot	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 17,000.00 / sqm
06-23	2,584 sqm commercial lot	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 17,000.00 / sqm
06-24	5,065 sqm commercial lot	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 17,000.00 / sqm
06-25	6,485 sqm commercial lot	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 17,000.00 / sqm
06-26	2,201 sqm commercial lot (not contiguous)	Acharon Blvd., General Santos City	P 15,000.00 / sqm

Interested bidders may obtain bidding documents starting June 26, 2006 upon payment of non-refundable fee of P500.00 from the Property Management Office, 3/F, RSBS Bldg., Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.

A Pre-Bidding Conference is scheduled on July 5, 2006 at 10:00 AM, Central Meeting Room A, RSBS, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.

Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders or their representatives on July 10, 2006 at 10:00 AM at the Central Meeting Room A, RSBS, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.

For further inquiries, you can call MS. LIZA HIZON or MR. DARWIN MANZANO at telephone numbers B124718 or 8114071 local 249.

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

US: N. Korea will pay a cost for launch

But Washington rules out shooting Pyongyang test missile out of the sky

WASHINGTON—THE US SUGGESTED IT HAS limited ability to shoot a North Korean missile out of the sky and spurned suggestions of a pre-emptive strike on the ground. Still, it warned the Koreans would pay a cost for a missile launch.

The US missile defense system, which now includes about a dozen interceptor missiles in Alaska and California and on some Navy ships, has suffered multiple test failures since President George W. Bush ordered the Reagan-era program accelerated in early 2001.

Missile defense experts disagree on current US ability to destroy a long-range missile once it is fired. But they seemed in agreement that shooting at it—and missing—would be a huge embarrassment.

A better solution, said Bush's national security adviser, Stephen

Hadley, was for the North Koreans to "give it up and not launch" the missile that the US believes is being fueled and prepared. "We think diplomacy is the right answer and that is what we are pursuing," he said Thursday.

Tensions persisted over North Korea's apparent preparations to test-fire a Taepodong-2 missile amid disagreements over US military options for responding. The missile, with a believed range of up to 15,000 km, is potentially capable of reaching the mainland United States.

Pentagon officials said they

were prepared to use the nation's missile defense system if needed.

Asked under what circumstances it would be used against a North Korean missile, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said Thursday, "The president would make a decision with respect to the nature of the launch, whether it was threatening to the territory of the United States or not, and the likely threat that it would pose."

Rumsfeld expressed no sense of alarm about the missile situation. "It's clear: All the intelligence suggests they have been making

preparations for a launch of a missile from the area of Taepo Dong for some days now. There's a lot we know and a lot we don't know. So we'll just have to see."

The US missile defense program is a downscaled land-and-sea version of a global defense network first proposed by Reagan that was dubbed "Star Wars" by critics. Interceptor missiles—linked to a network of satellites, radar, computers and command centers—are designed to strike and destroy incoming ballistic missiles.

The Pentagon says the system

is capable of defending against a limited number of missiles in an emergency—such as a North Korean attack. More than \$100 billion (euro80 billion) has been spent on the program since 1983, including \$7.8 billion (euro6.2 billion) authorized for the current fiscal year.

In the most recent test, a Navy ship late last month successfully shot down a long-range missile in its final seconds of flight. Before a successful test in the Pacific in December 2005, interceptor tests had failed five of 11 times. AP

Cell phone users may draw lightning

LONDON—PEOPLE SHOULD NOT use mobile phones outdoors during thunderstorms because of the risk of being struck by lightning, doctors said on Friday.

They reported the case of a 15-year-old girl who was using her phone in a park when she was hit during a storm. Although she was revived, she suffered persistent health problems and was using a wheelchair a year after the accident.

"This rare phenomenon is a public health issue, and education is necessary to highlight the risk of

using mobile phones outdoors during stormy weather to prevent future fatal consequences from lightning strikes injuries," said Swinda Esprit, a doctor at Northwick Park Hospital in England.

Esprit and other doctors at the hospital added in a letter to the British Medical Journal that usually when someone is struck by lightning, the high resistance of the skin conducts the flash over the body in what is known as a flashover.

But if a metal object, such as a phone, is in contact with the skin

it disrupts the flashover and increases the odds of internal injuries and death.

The doctors added that three fatal cases of lightning striking people while using mobile phones have been reported in newspapers in China, South Korea and Malaysia.

"The Australian Lightning Protection Standard recommends that metallic objects, including cordless or mobile phones, should not be used (or carried) outdoors during a thunderstorm," Esprit added. Reuters

Brazil's Varig airline fights for survival

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL—THE survival of Brazil's flagship airline Varig is on the line as a group of employees scramble to raise enough money for a first payment on the carrier, which faces liquidation if the money isn't paid or another suitor doesn't emerge.

The workers' group, TGV, faces a Friday deadline to make the US\$75 million (euro59.6 million) payment, but acknowledged it may not be able to come up with the cash.

Meanwhile, Varig continued to strand passengers in Brazil and abroad on Thursday. By the afternoon it had canceled 118 of its 189 flights, Brazil's National Civil Aviation Authority said.

Other domestic and international airlines geared up to take over Varig's routes if the company is broken up, but there could be an incredible crush of people trying to get back to Brazil if the carriers can't meet the demand.

Thursday night, officials announced that there are 28,000 people abroad who have tickets to fly to Brazil on the airline between this week and June 30. Thirteen thousand of them are in Europe, many of them Brazilians in Germany for the World Cup.

But the authorities insisted that some airlines were abiding with government pleas to honor Varig tickets, making it possible for Brazilians who got stuck overseas to get home—despite delays sometimes lasting days.

"I'm not minimizing the hassles for the passengers, but in the context of an emergency plan, I think it is a success," said Milton Zuanazzi, the aviation authority's general director. AP



FAN DANCER

A performer dances with a fan at a ceremony to start the fourth Beijing Olympic arts festival near the Chinese Wall at Badaling June 23.

Japan court rejects suit on war shrine

TOKYO—JAPAN'S SUPREME Court refused Friday to award damages to critics of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visits to a war shrine in its first ruling on the controversy that has set off tensions in East Asia.

Japan's top court said the plaintiffs had no grounds to deserve compensation for Koizumi's pilgrimages to Yasukuni shrine, which honors 2.5 million war dead including 14 top World War II war criminals.

Koizumi, who will step down in September, has gone to the shrine five times since taking office in 2001, infuriating China and South Korea which have refused one-on-one talks with him as a result.

In Friday's case, some 200 Japanese critics had sought a symbolic 10,000 yen (\$87) each from the government for "mental anguish" caused by Koizumi's 2001 visit.

The plaintiffs, who included rel-

atives of war dead, Buddhists and Christians, also argued that the pilgrimage to the Shinto shrine violated Japan's constitutional separation of religion and state.

But a unanimous four-judge bench led by Judge Isao Imai refused to rule on the constitutionality of the visits and said the plaintiffs had no reason to be compensated.

"Visiting a shrine cannot be its nature pressure or interfere on other people's religious life," the ruling said.

"Therefore, even if people visit a particular shrine and it hurts other people's religious feelings or makes them feel unpleasant, it cannot be seen as damage to the plaintiffs' interests and they cannot seek compensation automatically."

"There is no difference in a visit to Yasukuni shrine by a man with the position of prime minister," he wrote. AFP

SMOKY VALLEY

Smoke from the Brins fire lays down in the valley near Sedona, Ariz., June 22. The blaze started Sunday in a camp used by transients and spread quickly, forcing the evacuation of about 460 homes and businesses in the canyon more than 100 km north of Phoenix.

AP/THOMAS RENCK

Somalia rivals sign peace accord

KHARTOUM—RIVAL SOMALI leaders on Thursday reached an agreement to end fighting in the war-ravaged Horn of Africa country following Arab League-sponsored talks in Khartoum, officials said.

The agreement was signed after a delegation from the Islamic alliance, which ousted US-backed warlords from the Somali capital on June 5 after four months of fighting, went into talks with members of the

transitional government.

The agreement recognizes "the legality of the transitional government and the presence of the alliance of Islamic tribunals," Arab League Secretary General Amr Mussa told reporters after heading talks between the two sides.

The text calls for an "end to media and military campaigns ... the pursuit of dialogue without preconditions in the framework of mutual recognition" and "the judgment of

war criminals," Mussa said.

It was signed by a prominent scholar representing the Islamic courts, Ali Mohammed Ibrahim, and Somali Foreign Minister Abdullah al-Sheikh Ismail.

The meeting came after both sides held separate consultations with Arab officials—including Mussa—as well as Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, who holds the rotating chair of the pan-Arab body.

APP

"I'm not minimizing the hassles for the passengers, but in the context of an emergency plan, I think it is a success," said Milton Zuanazzi, the aviation authority's general director. AP

US gets access to bank records

WASHINGTON—THE BUSH AD- ministration has been quietly tracking people suspected of bankrolling terrorism through a secret program that gives the US government access to a massive data base of international financial transactions.

Treasury Department officials said they used broad subpoenas to collect the financial records from an international system known as Swift. Stuart Levey, Treasury's undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, called the subpoenas "a legal and proper use of our authorities."

"Since immediately following 9/11, the American government has taken every legal measure to prevent another attack on our country," Dana Perino, deputy White House

press secretary, said. "One of the most important tools in the fight against terror is our ability to choke off funds for the terrorists."

Under the program, US counterterrorism analysts could query Swift's financial data base looking for information on activities by suspected terrorists as part of specific terrorism investigations, a Treasury Department official said. They would do so by plugging in a name or names, the official said.

The program involved both the CIA and the Treasury Department.

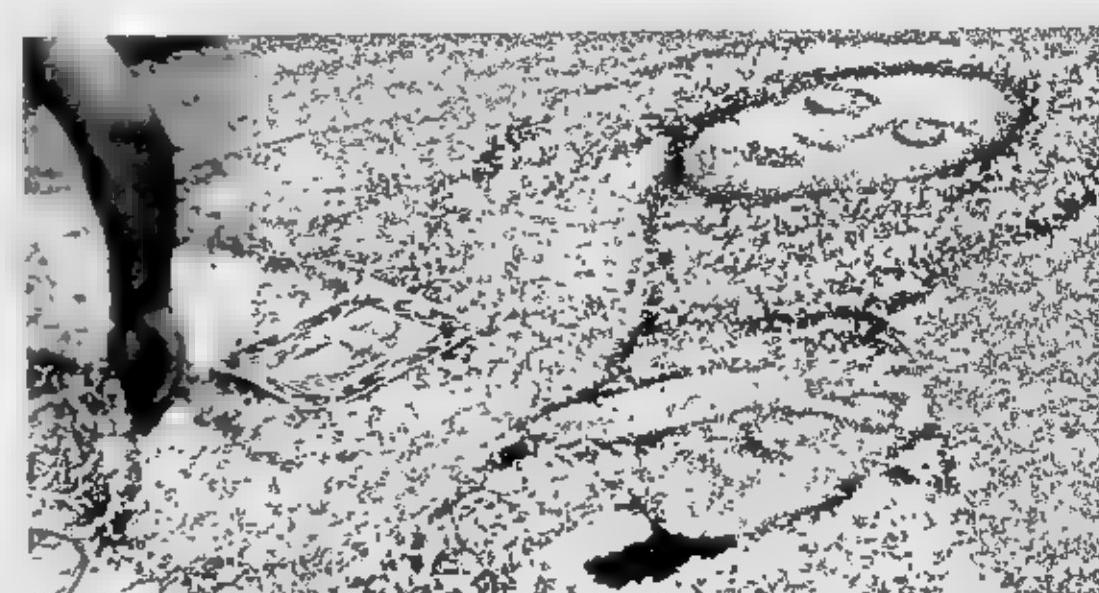
Swift, or the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, is a cooperative based in Belgium that handles financial message traffic from 7,800 financial institutions in more than 200 countries.

The service, which routes more than 11 million messages each day, mostly captures information on wire transfers and other methods of moving money in and out of the United States. It doesn't execute these money transfers. The service generally doesn't detect private, individual transactions in the United States, such as withdrawals from an ATM or bank deposits. It is aimed mostly at international transfers.

The administration defended use of the program, saying it plays a vital role in its efforts to identify terrorist financiers.

"Our subpoena of terrorist-related records from Swift has provided us with a unique and powerful window into the operations of terrorist networks," Levey said.

AP



FLOWER CARPET

A man works on an intricate flower carpet in the town of La Orotava, Spain, June 22, part of Corpus Christi celebrations.

SPORTS

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2006

PFF told: Explain how P88M was spent

By Musong R. Castillo

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION FOOTBALL Association, in trying to exercise its rights as a stockholder of the Philippine Football Federation, has again been prevented from finding out where an P88 million budget from Fifa, the world football body, has gone.

An accountant accompanied by NCRFA officials yesterday failed to enter the PFF offices at the PhilSports Complex in Pasig after the federation declared a "holiday" for its employees for the day.

The NCRFA had written the PFF a letter

dated June 15, informing the federation of its desire to have the financial records audited on suspicion of anomalous transactions entered into by the PFF in the last three years.

NCRFA representatives Mon Jose, Robbie Sandejas and auditor Bonifacio Santiano were all informed by Ultra security personnel of the "holiday" declared by PFF secretary Jennifer Hernandez on Thursday.

Security guard Ruby Achucor said Hernandez did not give a reason for the holiday.

The Inquirer tried to get the side of PFF president Johnny Romualdez and the association's public relations man, Ed For-

moso, through text messages that were left unanswered.

The Inquirer, though, learned that Romualdez rejected the NCRFA request on June 21, citing the absence of a valid reason to have the books opened.

But NCRFA president Jose Vito Borromeo argued that being "stockholders of the PFF, we are entitled to see the books anytime we wish."

Borromeo, who has been at odds with Romualdez, said that his association's suspicions started after the Feb. 25 football congress in Iloilo where the PFF declared expenses amounting to a combined P88

million from 2003 to last year.

"We are just wondering how all the money was spent," Borromeo told the Inquirer in a telephone interview. "We just want the truth. And if the PFF is not hiding anything, then why not let the auditor do his job and make everyone see (the books)?"

Borromeo also said that the development yesterday has left him, and 50 percent of the 28 football associations under the PFF umbrella—which he claims are backing the NCRFA—with no other option but to seek the intervention of the courts.

"It (audit) is our right because we are incorporators of the PFF," Borromeo said.

Asi, RenRen, Alapag can't go to Jones Cup

IN HUDDLE**Beth Celis**

IT'S BEEN A BUSY, most interesting week for me. I had the opportunity to meet and have a long chat with sports-showbiz couple James Yap and Kris Aquino who, I discovered, are both very easy to like; I got the chance to sit down with Welcoat owners Terry Que and Raymond Yu to discuss their "wish list"; I got to interview Ateneo head coach Norman Black and team manager Paolo Trillo regarding the Ateneo Blue Eagles' preparations for the 2006 UAAP season; I got to attend Harbour Centre's extended victory celebration twice, and I had a long talk with PBA vice chair Ricky Vargas on his team's rehab plans for the 2006-07 PBA season.

Gosh, I almost forgot. I also had the chance to revisit Eugene Tejada at the Makati Medical Center (he said he was still feeling "the same") and say "hi" to his agent Bobby Rous, who was returning to San Francisco that day. Plus, I had a short interview with Purefoods cager and MVP aspirant Kerby Raymundo about his team's chances of making the finals despite trailing Alaska, 0-2, in the ongoing PBA Philippine Cup best-of-seven semifinal series.

Like teammate James Yap, Kerby is confident that the Giants would get back on track in Game 3 (yesterday).

"We just have to make minor adjustments. We studied the videotapes of Games One and Two and have realized that our mistakes are basic, *madaling maitama*," Kerby said.

Both he and James agree that the long layoff may have also contributed to the Giants' lethargy.

"Nagka-inertia. But after two games, tanguil na ang katalwang," James said.

James and Kerby are No. 1 and No. 3, respectively, in the MVP statistical race after the quarterfinals. Red Bull's Enrico Vilante is in second place, Ginebra's Mark Caguioa No. 4 and Lordy Tugade No. 5.

Because of his team's dismal performance this conference, TNT's Ricky Vargas and the coaching staff have drafted an intensive training program for the Phone Pals during the off-season.

On July 12, the team will fly to Los Angeles to compete in a summer league which will include a strong squad from China. From there, the team will undergo specific training under American experts.

The Phone Pals will be out of the country from July 12 up to the first week of August. The conflict in schedule will not allow the three national cagers—Asi Taulava, Jimmy Alapag and RenRen Rizalito—to join the RP team in the Jones Cup and the Sultan's Cup in Brunei, which means coach Chot Reyes will have to make some adjustments.

"Our schedules have been firmed up way before we were informed about these overseas tournaments. We've booked for air travel, lodgings and have paid the fees," explained Ricky.

Welcoat's Terry Que made a rare appearance with partner Raymond Yu and Harbour Centre's Mikee Romero at the PSA Forum last Tuesday, and to everyone's delight, the mike-shy team owner even spoke a few words to the audience who wanted to know if Welcoat was ready for the PBA.

"Handang-handang na!" Terry uttered. Behind the microphone, he was stony with words.

Later over lunch, Terry said that minus the mike, he was not that shy.

"The truth is, we are not really that ready yet, if we're talking about the lineup. We're still wracking our brains on how we can form a respectable team," Terry said.

He and Raymond's greatest fear is that the Paintmasters might get clobbered every game. Welcoat was allowed to elevate three players from their amateur team. The teams are protecting 10 players to give way to the expansion draft.

If they had a choice, Terry and Raymond would like to form their PBA squad around the Welcoat cagers who are now in the PBA. These are: James Yap, Rommel Adducal, Yancy de Ocampo, Don Alcalado, RenRen Rizalito, Marc Pingris, Celino Cruz, Barvin Soto, Willie Wilson, Neilbert Omolom and Ronald Tubid.

"That's our wish list," chorused Raymond and Terry.

Devance did not snub RP team, says Toyota Otis

FIL-AM JOE DEVANCE WASN'T REMISS ABOUT HIS national team duties. Toyota Otis team owner Gil Angeles clarified yesterday that Devance intended to suit up for the RP team, but had to fly back to the United States to attend to his ailing mother. "He had to go home as soon as possible because his mother will be undergoing open heart surgery," said Angeles. He left on June 20. Coach Chot Reyes invited Devance, the Philippine Basketball League's MVP, to be part of the national pool that will compete in the Jones Cup on July 8-16 in Taiwan. But early reports claimed Devance left for Texas after Toyota Otis lost to Harbour Centre in the PBL title series.

Jasmine W. Payo

Suico fighting for world title

Amonsot sees action on July 2

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

CEBU CITY—WORLD-RANKED RANDY SUICO, originally scheduled to see action in the Manny Pacquiao-Oscar Larios undercard, has been chosen to challenge World Boxing Association lightweight champion Juan Diaz on July 15 at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Suico, currently training in Tokyo for the July 2 fight at the Big Dome, will have to get back to the country on Sunday to work out his visa requirements in time for the July 15 world title break, said Rex "Wakee" Salud, an associate of Suico's Japanese manager Joe Koizumi.

Set to replace Suico in the "Mano-A-Mano" card is the equally popular Czar Amonsot, who holds the WBO Asia Pacific super-featherweight crown. Amonsot takes on Mexican Silverio Ortiz in a 10-round non-title bout.

Cebuano boxing patron Antonio Aldeguer yesterday confirmed that Amonsot would be replacing Suico.

Amonsot (16-1-1, 10 KOs), who is fresh off two major victories in Las Vegas, will add luster to the Pacquiao-Larios encounter.

Salud, who is arranging the lineup of big card at the Araneta Coliseum, has also confirmed Amonsot's participation, indicating that the Tagbilaran City fighter will be a big plus for the boxing extravaganza.



ABLE REPLACEMENT: WBO Asia Pacific super-featherweight champion Czar Amonsot works out in Cebu City. (CDN PHOTO/LARRY SALAN)

Xavier, Ateneo dispute Adidas futsal lead

IT WILL BE A CLASH OF TITANS WHEN XAVIER Alumnae Football Club and the Ateneo booters dispute the solo lead in men's 2nd Division-A at the resumption of the 2006 Adidas Futsal Championship today at the FMAC Gym in La Salle Green Hills in Mandaluyong City.

Xavier and Ateneo share the lead with two wins apiece, although Xavier has the edge in goal difference, going into the fourth week of this tournament spon-

sored by Adidas and held in cooperation with the National Capital Region Football Association (NCRFA).

The co-leaders collide at 3 p.m., right after the 2 p.m. match between Los Borrachos and Unyon FC, which both tote 1-0 cards in men's 2nd Division-B.

APP Selection (0-1) and Marines (0-1) clash at 4 p.m., each hoping to make it to the win column.

In the lone women's game slated at 4 p.m., Archers

650 tests the mettle of Vintage FC with the former La Salle collegiate stars gunning for their third victory in four starts. Vintage is looking to improve its 1-1 mark.

Air Force, the solo leader in men's 1st Division with a 2-0 card, battles Navy (0-1-1) at 6 p.m., while Pasagad (0-1-2) and Kaya FC (1-1) cap the hostilities at 7 p.m.

The tournament moves to the Adidas SportsKamp tomorrow with another heavy, seven-game schedule.

Figueroa takes recurve crown; Tabanag scores

OLONGAPO CITY—ATHENS OLYMPIAN JASMIN Figueroa flashed her old deadly form to emerge as nation's target archery champion for the second straight year Thursday in the Philippine Olympic Festival's archery event at the Subic Bay Freeport Football field here.

"I'm overjoyed, although I initially felt a bit nervous," said the 20-year-old Figueroa after keeping the women's recurve title by beating newcomer Emily Mae Yap of Cebu, 98 points to 89, in the Olympic round finals.

Rachel Anne Cabral, 23rd SEAG bronze medalist, finished third.

Four-year-old Jamaila Mikhail R. Inductivo, the youngest archer in NAAP's 45-year-history, capped two golds for winning the qualifying and Olympic Rounds. Inductivo topped the novice class with 63 points.

Veteran Joann Tabanag ruled the adult compound over Jennifer Chan via a tiebreak after the two had finished with identical 108 points.

The other winners were Janet Bermas (81 points), Leina May Bolina (103), Lourdes May Bellona (79) and Ana Mariel Inton (96) in the Para competitive, junior standard and Cadet divisions, respectively.

Dimakiling tops chess tilt

TAGAYTAY CITY—INTERNATIONAL MASTER OLIVER Dimakiling bucked a sluggish start then got lucky in the tiebreak to rule the 2006 National Chess Open Blitz Championship Thursday at the Tagaytay International Convention Center. The 2005 Southeast Asian Games double silver medalist halved the point with M. Richard Bitoon in the 11th round to amass 8.5 points. He actually finished tied with Bitoon and fellow FM Ronald Cabello. Dimakiling, however, registered superior tiebreak points (54.25 Sonnen Burger) to top the meet organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines as part of the inaugural staging of the Philippine Olympic Festival. In close second was Bitoon (51.25 SB) while Cabello settled for third (48.50 SB). Dimakiling won the P10,000 top prize.

Spring, Tagaytay cagers advance

SPRING COOKING OIL-PARAÑAQUE and Batang Tagaytay triumphed anew Thursday to storm into the national crossover semifinals of the Guerrero Brandy-NBC basketball championship.

The Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Vice Mayor Anjo Ylana outlasted the Pangasinan Hundred Islands, 73-65, at the Lyceum gym while the Tagaytay cagers of NBC executive vice president and Mayor Bambol Tolentino overpowered Bacchus/Harbour Centre-Manila, 92-87, before a huge crowd at Tagaytay's International Convention Center.

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Nani Epondulan poured in 25 points but it was Larry Rodriguez's fourth-quarter heroics that enabled the Cooking Oil Masters to sweep the series with Pangasinan in the tournament.

With the Pangasinenses leading 60-56, early in the final period, Rodriguez ignited a 14-0 run to help Spring-Parañaque pull away, 70-60, going into the last two minutes.

Arden Guiyab and Nino Marquez combined for 53 points to propel Tagaytay to victory at home.

The scores:

SPRING 73—Epondulan 25, Rodriguez 10,

Morales 6, Manuel 6, Capobres 6, Yamhao 6, Yee 5, Ortigera 4, De Castro 2, Soriano 2, Inigo 1, Reyes 0, Tiengoo 0, Barrion 0, Lazaro 0.

PANGASINAN 65—Asi 19, Aquino 13, Lopez 11, Tolentino 9, Tiengson 4, Yamhao 4, Baleres 3, Ico 2, Ruiz 0.

Quarters: 19-23, 44-42, 55-55, 73-65

TUESDAY 92—Guylab 30, Marquez 23, Robilots 12, Gendin 5, Pinular 5, Caceres 5, Mendoza 4, Reyes 4, Malar 4.

BACCHUS/HARBOUR 87—Bernalis 23, Cuvelles 12, Cuyokang 12, Retaga 11, Membreza 7, Romata 7, Gamboa 7, Aquino 3, Sta. Cruz 3, Hardin 2.

Quarters: 35-29, 51-41, 73-67, 92-87

NBC Selection to defend title in Thai Prince Cup

THE NATIONAL BASKETBALL CONFERENCE (NBC) Selection will go all out to defend its title when it competes in the 10th Crown Prince Cup invitational basketball tournament in Songkha, Thailand, on June 26 to July 2.

Backed by Spring Cooking Oil, the team will be bannered by NBC's outstanding players.

Five Spring mainstays—pre-season MVP Marvin Yamhao, Mar Reyes, Danny Capobres, Larry Rodriguez and Marvin Ortigera—join Iligan's Markon Kalaw and Ronnie Matias, Toyota-Iloilo's Eldrin Senerez and Ozamiz Cota's Gerry Cavan and Boyet Guerrero in the squad.

Spring-Parañaque mentor Efren "Fong" Garcia will handle the team together with Iligan's Jun Longalong and Ozamiz's Albert Calvo.

Challenging the Filipsinos are the national teams of Thailand and Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea's top collegiate team and three club teams from India and Japan.

Last year, the NBC Selection coached by Jun Noel, Al Solis and Vic Sanchez swept the crown.

AND THEY'RE OFF. Hundreds of runners answer the starting gun in the Olympic Day Run at the Adidas SportsKamp at The Fort in Tagaytay City recently. Crescendo Sabal of the Philippine Army clocked 33 minutes and 47 seconds to rule the 10K competition of the event, which was part of the just concluded Philippine Olympic Festival. The age-group champions were Aljean Diente and Macrose Dichoso (18 and under); Gerald Sabal and Mirasol Abad (19 to 25); Roger Sawinay and Genevieve de la Pena (26 to 35); Reynaldo de los Reyes and Delma Ocariza (36 to 45) and Diosdado Labrador (46 to 55).

The champion will receive P75,000 while the runner-up gets P30,000.

The Novice Category, which will be held the next day, is

Adamson tests mettle of Lyceum

ADAMSON, ALREADY ASSURED OF A PLAYOFFS BERTH, GETS TO sharpen its skills against pesky spoiler Lyceum today in the penultimate semifinal date of the Shakey's V-League at the Blue Eagle Gym.

The Lady Falcons downed San Sebastian last Wednesday to assure themselves of a rubber-match for the last finals slot. But they can still make it outright depending on the Lady Stags' performance versus Far Eastern in the last semis day on Monday.

At any rate, Adamson hopes to escape Lyceum's freak

STANDINGS	W	L
La Salle	11	2
Adamson	9	4
S. Sebastian	8	6
Lyceum	7	7
FEU	5	8

GAMES TODAY
(Blue Eagle Gym)
12 noon—Adamson vs. Lyceum
2 p.m.—FEL vs. DLSU

winning streak as the Lady Pirates, though out of contention, have won three straight games against tough teams like La Salle and San Sebastian.

La Salle will once again try different combinations when it takes on also-ran Far Eastern in the other game.

The Lady Archers have wagered



THEY maybe out of the running, but the Lyceum Lady Pirates' (center) fighting spirit remains as strong as ever.

their once immaculate record twice in a row, hoping to gain more flexibility and depth for the best-of-three championship series.

La Salle is also expected to give Thai import Jindarat Kanchana enough rest and allow its local

lineup to step up.

Kanchana, the backbone of La Salle's offense, is nursing a knee injury after a grueling match-up with fellow Thai reinforcement Jalernsi Boulee of San Sebastian last week. Marc Anthony Reyes

Roberto, T'pinco bow out

LORA ROBERTO AND ANYA TAN-PINCO failed to sustain their fine form in morning play and were eliminated from the 106th National Amateur Golf Championships of the Women's Western Golf Association in Bluefield, Virginia, Thursday.

Roberto lost, 5 and 4, to Adrienne Milligan of North Carolina in the

Last-16 matches after disposing of Frederique Brueil of Ohio, 3 and 2, in the morning battles among the top 32 survivors of the first round.

Tanpinco advanced to the last 32 after beating Marianne Towersey of Pebble Beach, 2 and 1, but was humbled, 7 and 5, by Morgan Olds of Connecticut in the upper bracket.

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Knicks fire Brown as coach, hire Thomas as replacement

NEW YORK — THE NEW YORK Knicks put Larry Brown out of his coaching misery on Thursday, ending weeks of uncertainty by firing the Hall of Fame coach with four years and a reported \$40 million (euro32 million) left on his contract.

President and general manager

Isiah Thomas will replace Brown as coach.

In Brown's lone season in New York, the Knicks stumbled to a 23-59 record — second worst in the NBA and matching the most losses in club history — while Brown publicly feuded with Stephon Marbury and other players.

AP

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SPORTSWATCH

Bosconian Golf Cup

THE 1ST BOSCONIAN GOODWILL GOLF CUP, AN 18-hole tournament open to all Don Bosco alumni and their friends, will be held on June 28 at The Orchard Golf & Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite. The tournament is hosted by the Don Bosco Mandaluyong High School Batch '82, sponsored by Shakey's Pizza and supported by Citibank and Mayor Ely Pillas of Jalajala, Rizal. Aside from alumni of Don Bosco Mandaluyong, Bosconians from Pampanga and Makati and other schools are joining the golf fest. Tickets will be available at the registration table on tournament date. Call event chairman Vic Gregorio at 0920-9136182 or event marketing manager Dondo de la Vega at 0917-5357317 or Rosalie Salva at 8390158.

Makati derby stakes P2M

THE WTJ SPORTS AND AMUSEMENT CORP. presents another blockbuster cockfest at Makati Colliseum on July 10, 12, 15, 17, 19 and 22, the Saipuan Taglagon 6-cock derby offering a guaranteed prize of P2 million and a brand new Ford Escape. Promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co of WTJ pegged the entry fee at P10,000 and minimum bet at P5,500. Sponsor is B-Meg Derby Asia. Meanwhile, the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) Championship 6-cock derby fires off on Monday and Wednesday, June 26 and 28. For details, call 896-3545 and 895-8475.

Fastest Win event at SJC

GUARANTEED PRIZES ARE AT STAKE TODAY when the Fastest Win One-Cock Ultimat-ankids at San Juan Coliseum beginning at 10 a.m. with Saguapan Complexor 3000 as main backer. The fastest win champion, who will be chosen after every five fights, will get P15,000 while the second receives P5,000, said promoters Sam Mendoza and Ronnie Lascina. Up next at SJC is the United Backyard Breeders Association (JBBA) 3-cock derby on July 1. For inquiries, call 725-5369 and 725-6563 or 0917-8041691 (Ronnie).

Nicklaus Int'l Inv't'l golf slated at Sta. Elena

THE LOCAL QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT FOR the prestigious Jack Nicklaus International Invitational, in Florida, tees off on July 3 at the Sta. Elena Golf Club in Cabuyao, Laguna.

Organizers said players need only the receipt for a P3,500 purchase of Jack Nicklaus apparel or accessories at any Rustan's Department Store in Metro Manila and Cebu from May 15 to June 30 to be able to compete in the tournament.

The International Invitational is scheduled in November at the Bear's Club in Jupiter, Florida.

Filipino golfers over 21, male or female, can take a crack at the international stint by winning the event presented by Sta. Elena in cooperation with Volvo for Life and primarily sponsored by Gulf Air, El Nido Resort and Island Transvoyager.

Green fees, golf carts and food are free and each player will be given a Jack Nicklaus International Invitational signature shirt.

The winners of the men's and women's divisions will be entitled to a round-trip airfare to Florida, as well as four days and three nights accommodation with full meals.

The two second prize winners will get roundtrip tickets each to Dubai courtesy of Gulf Air, while the two third placers plus a guest each will win a roundtrip airfare and three days and two nights accommodation with breakfast at the El Nido Resort in Palawan.

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SPORTS

Italians oust No. 2 Czechs

Ronaldo ties goal record; Australia also advances



First Round

Team*	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Germany	3	3	0	0	8	2	9
Ecuador	3	2	0	1	5	3	6
Poland	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
Costa Rica	3	0	0	3	3	9	0
GROUP B							
England	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
Sweden	3	1	2	0	3	2	5
Paraguay	3	1	0	2	2	2	3
Trinidad & Tobago	3	0	1	2	0	4	1
GROUP C							
Argentina	3	2	1	0	8	1	7
Netherlands	3	2	1	0	3	1	7
Ivory Coast	3	1	0	2	5	6	3
Serbia & Mont.	3	0	0	3	2	10	0
GROUP D							
Portugal	3	3	0	0	5	1	9
3	1	1	1	1	4	3	4
Angola	3	0	2	1	1	2	2
Iraq	3	0	1	2	2	6	1
GROUP E							
Italy	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
Ghana	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
Czech Republic	3	1	0	2	3	4	3
USA	3	0	1	2	2	6	1
GROUP F							
Brazil	3	3	0	0	7	1	9
Australia	3	1	1	1	5	5	4
Croatia	3	0	2	1	2	3	2
Japan	3	0	1	2	2	7	1
GROUP G							
Switzerland	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Korea Republic	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
France	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Togo	2	0	0	2	1	4	0
GROUP H							
Spain	2	2	0	0	7	1	6
Ukraine	2	1	0	1	4	4	3
Saudi Arabia	2	0	1	1	3	5	1
Saudi Arabia	2	0	1	1	2	6	1

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Italy 2, Czech Republic 0
Ghana 2, United States 1
Brazil 4, Japan 1
Croatia 2, Australia 2

TEAM*
MP - Matches Played
W - Wins
D - Draws
L - Losses
GF - Goals For
GA - Goals Against
Pts - Points

TOO DAY'S MATCHES

Togo vs France; Switzerland vs South Korea; Saudi Arabia vs Spain; Ukraine vs Tunisia

BERLIN—THE WORLD CUP got its first high-profile casualty Thursday and its first surprise successes.

The second-ranked Czech Republic exited after losing its final Group E game, 2-0, to Italy, which won its group and advanced. Ghana and Australia advanced ahead of more favored teams.

Ghana beat the United States, 2-1, to reach the second round in its first tourna-

ment and send the No. 5 Americans home.

Australia drew, 2-2, with 1998 semifinalist Croatia to edge its opponent for a round-of-16 berth alongside defending champion Brazil, which beat Japan, 4-1, with Ronaldo scoring two goals to tie the tournament's all-time scoring record.

Australia will be up against three-time world champion Italy in its next game in Kaiserslautern on Monday. Ghana will be in action Tuesday against Brazil in Dortmund.

In Hamburg, Italy defender Marco Mat-

teazzi replaced the injured Alessandro Nesta in the 17th minute against the Czech Republic and scored nine minutes

Australia, which last played at the World Cup in 1974 and trailed early on, first leveled through Craig Moore's penalty and then through Harry Kewell with 11 minutes left.

Criticized for his weight and sluggish performances in early games, Ronaldo appeared close to top form. He first leveled at 1-1 with a header a minute into first-half injury time and scored his second goal in the 81st with a right-footer from 20 meters.

The first goal moved him past Pele as Brazil's all-time scoring leader in the competition and the second tied the record held by Gerd Mueller of Germany.

Also, Fifa said Thursday that Brazil won't get to keep the World Cup trophy if it wins its sixth title in Germany.

Fifa communications director Markus Steigler denied that Brazil, or any other team, would get to keep one of the most globally recognized prizes in sport. AP

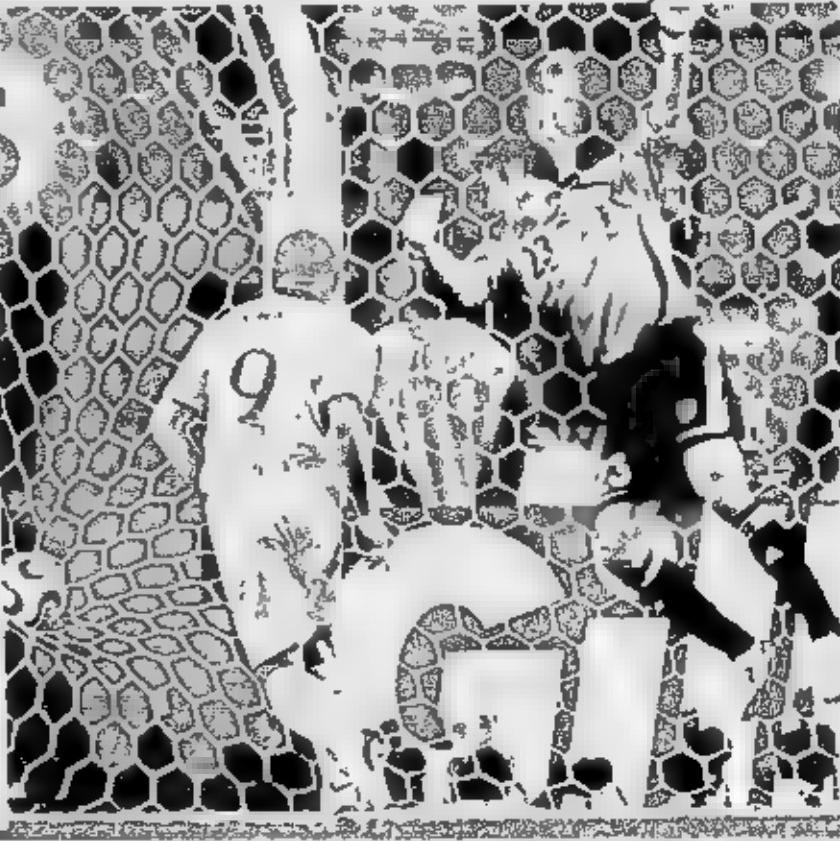
- FIFA WORLD CUP ON SPORTPLUS
- 4 a.m.—Japan vs Brazil
- 4 p.m.—Croatia vs Australia
- (replay tomorrow @ 1 a.m.)
- 10 p.m.—Saudi Arabia vs Spain

AUSTRALIA'S Harry Kewell celebrates scoring his team's second goal against Croatia.

REUTERS



AUSTRALIA'S Harry Kewell celebrates scoring his team's second goal against Croatia.



SUPERSTAR Ronaldo (left) scores during Brazil's round Group F World Cup football match against Japan. AFP

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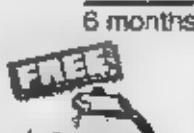
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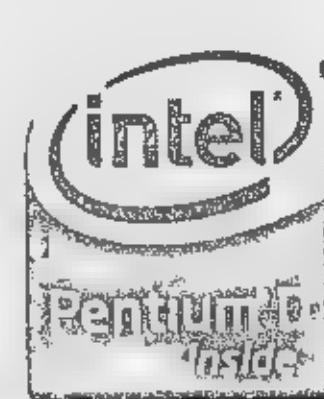
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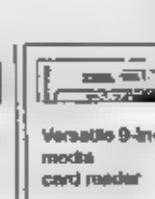
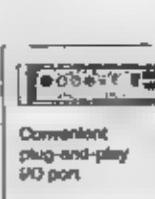
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E-mail: pr_saturday_special@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Nestor U. Torre
Assistant Editor Rito P. Asilo**SATURDAY**

A2-1

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NOW SHOWING

More paunch than punch

By Rito P. Asilo

"Pacquiao"D: Joel Lamangan
S: Jericho Rosales, Bea Alonzo

THE LIFE STORY OF WORLD BOXING CHAMP MANNY PACQUIAO has the stuff that cinematic dreams are made of. But, despite its unquestionably talented leads—Jericho Rosales and Bea Alonzo as the gutsy pugilist and his wife, Jinkee, respectively—the bio flick director Joel Lamangan delivers doesn't pack as much wallop as it should.

In protracted prefunctory hit-and-miss punches, the Pacman's uneven film bio chronicles the life and times of the celebrated boxing hero. From his humble beginnings as a bright but poor student (played by Jiro Mano) in Mindanao, Manny defies poverty, a domineering mother (Jaclyn Jose) and a jealous wife as he stubbornly chases after a dream that takes him all the way to the top of his chosen sport.

Along the way, as shown in flashbacks that trudge along like an uneventful boxing bout, he makes grave mistakes (gambling, drugs, women, bad business choices, etc.) and learns—and obviously earns, based on countless product placements in the film—from them.

With the reliable Alonzo, who shines despite a one-note character, Rosales delivers a passionate performance that captures the spirit and spark that make Pacquiao tick. But, Jericho and Bea's performances are lost in the production's narrative clutter, and are compromised by the movie's slow pace, unexciting boxing matches, and a hectic story that wants to explore many things but only manages to say so much.

Lamangan does make a valid case about the cautionary rise of boxers who, in victory, proudly swagger like invincible warriors, only to totter like scared tots when the specter of defeat—and retirement—begins to haunt them.

"Kapag Tumibok ang Puso"D: Wenn Deramas
S: Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., Ai-Ai de las Alas, Precious Lara Quigaman

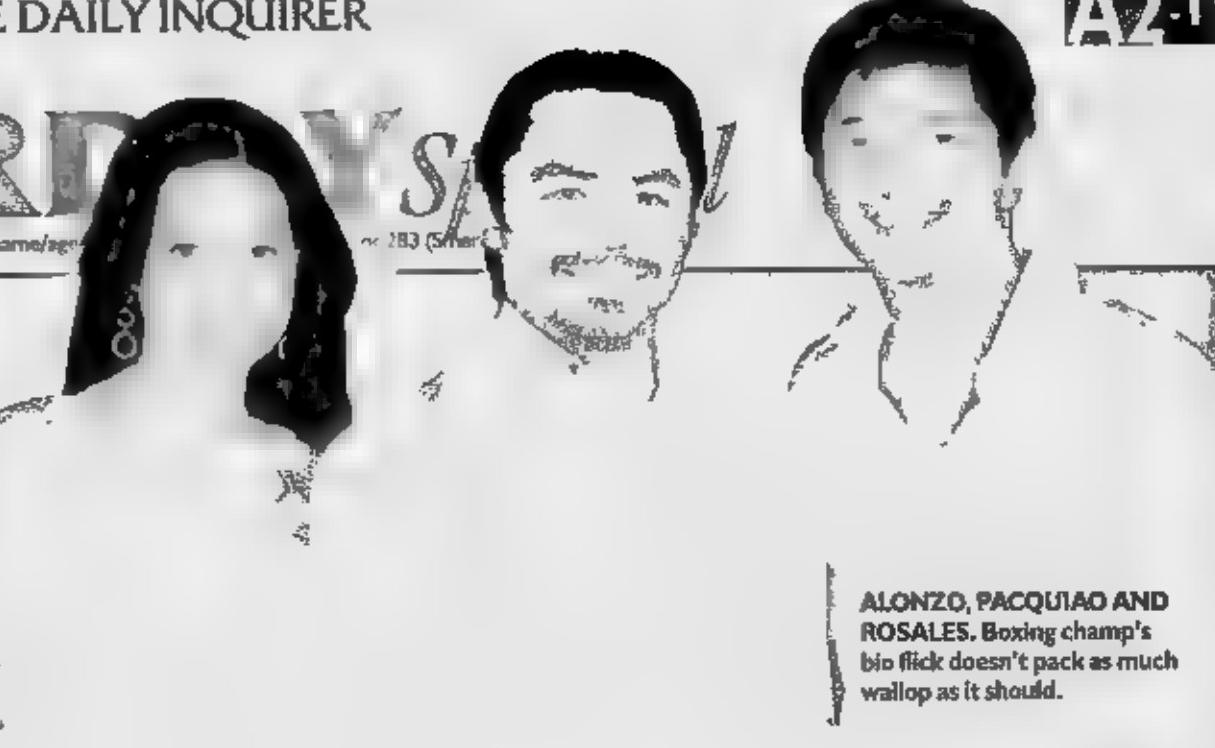
We don't know what to make of this rom-com smorgasbord: When Marco (Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr.) learns about the failed attempts on the life of Love (Ai-Ai de las Alas), a garish, foul-mouthed businesswoman who "inherited" his departed wife Sarah's (Miss International 2005 Precious Lara Quigaman) heart, he feels obligated to protect her.

Despite strong opposition from family and friends, he soon finds himself drawn to the caustic, uniquely kooky charms of Love. But, does this unlikely couple's budding romance stand a chance? Love does move in zany, mysterious ways, and, in Marco and Love's case, it really does.

To be fair, some well-thought-out gags generate hearty chuckles ("Wowowee's" Janelle Jamer engages in a dead-on impersonation of Rufa Mae Quinto). But, despite a largely comic cast and a catchy theme song (remade with gusto by Toni Gonzaga and, in a more sedate version, by Deejay Durano), the movie is dragged down by several factors: Comic scenes that plateau long before they manage to deliver their trite punchlines; Ai-Ai's heavy-handed comedy; Bong's increasingly unbecoming paunch, and Bong and Ai-Ai's awkward, wince-worthy romantic sequences.

The movie's jarring continuity gaffes don't help, either: When Marco and Love's kids (Aaron Junatas and Kiray Celis, respectively) figure in a fight, they start exchanging blows—before they leave for school in the morning. The succeeding frame, however, shows Marco and Love putting a stop to the kid's duel when they come home from a date in the evening!

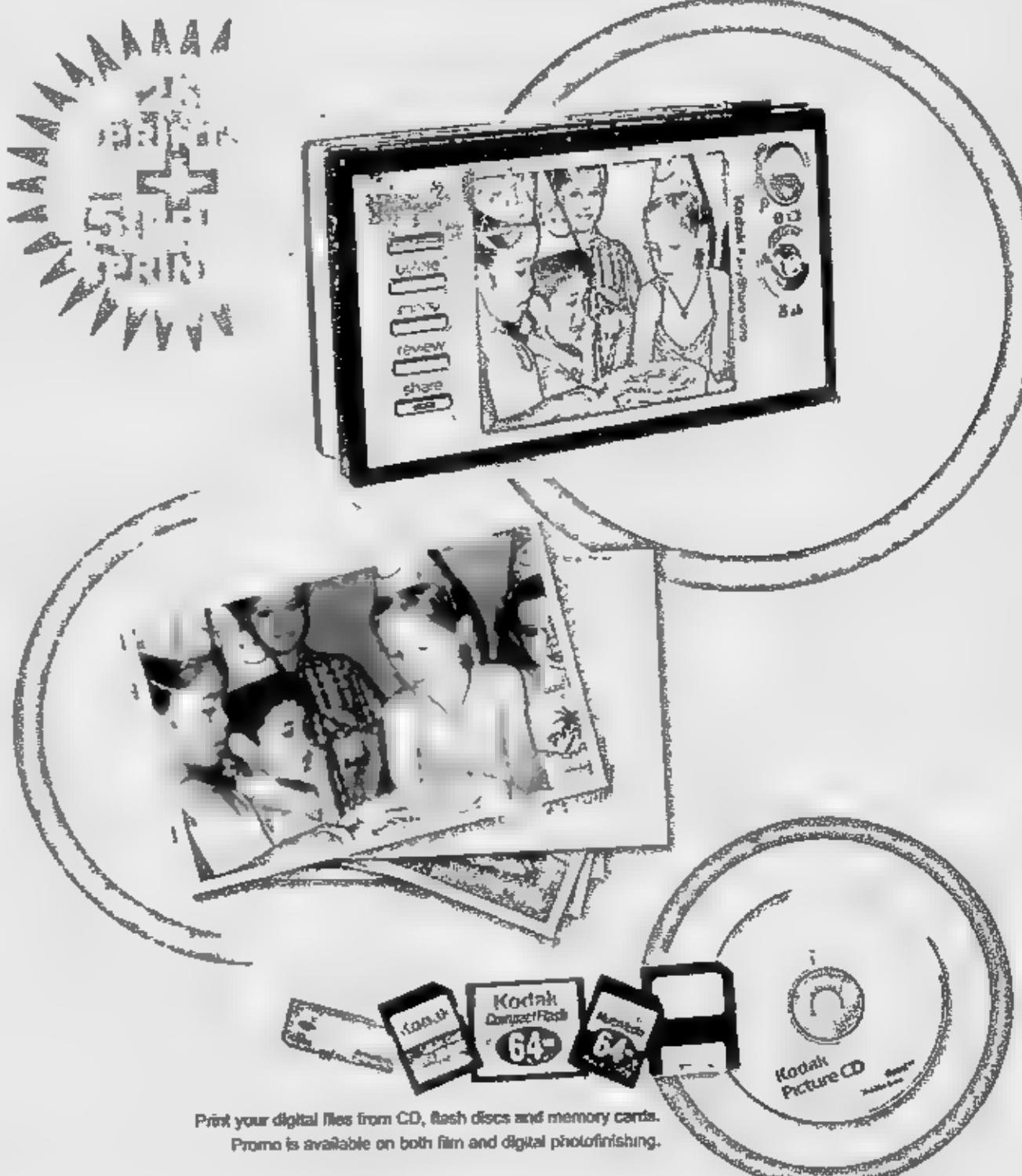
The production, though, has one bright spot in the person of Inah Revilla, who plays her father's daughter in the movie. Sure, the pretty young lass still has a lot to learn in the acting department, but she exudes a refreshing presence on the big screen—and that's more than we can say for many of show biz's current pretty but bland newcomers.



ALONZO, PACQUIAO AND ROSALES. Boxing champ's bio flick doesn't pack as much wallop as it should.

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GALLERIA

1 LAKE HOUSE • THX
11:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

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12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

2 SCARY MOVIE 4
11:20 1:25 3:30 5:35 7:40 9:50

7 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING

3 WHORE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

8 CARS 12:00 2:30
GARFIELD 2 5:35 7:40 8:45

4 PACQUIAO the MOVIE
11:20 1:25 3:30 5:35 7:40 9:45

9 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

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10 THE DA VINCI CODE

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2 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
3 SCARY MOVIE 4

4 LAKE HOUSE
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6 THE NUN

MALABON

1 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

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PIONEER

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3 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
4 LAKE HOUSE

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2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
3 CARS
4 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
5 SCARY MOVIE 4

DASMARIÑAS

1 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 THE OMEN
4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH

1 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
3 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
4 SCARY MOVIE 4

IMUS

1 CHAOS
2 SCARY MOVIE 4
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
4 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE

1 FAILURE TO LAUNCH
2 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
3 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
4 SCARY MOVIE 4
5 LAKE HOUSE
6 THE INSIDE MAN

LOILO

1 SCARY MOVIE 4
2 CARS
3 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
4 THE OMEN
5 GARFIELD 2
6 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

1 CARS
2 PACQUIAO THE MOVIE
3 SCARY MOVIE 4
4 GARFIELD 2
5 THE INSIDE MAN
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5 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

6 THE INSIDE MAN

7 GARFIELD 2

8 CARS

9 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

10 THE OMEN

11 LAKE HOUSE

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93 THE OMEN

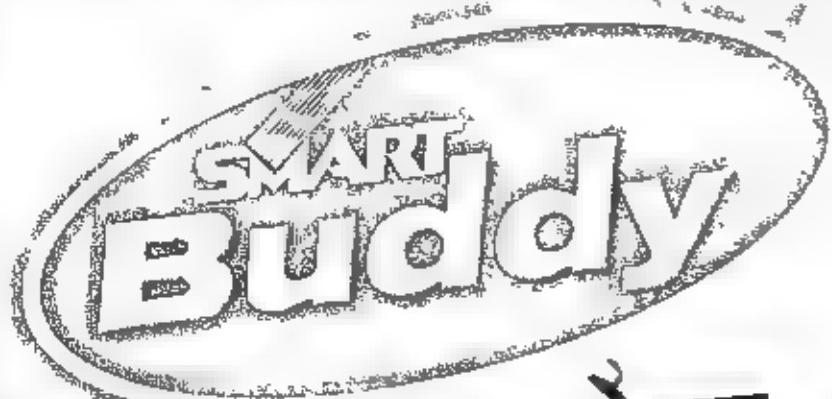
94 GARFIELD 2

95 THE OMEN

96 SCARY MOVIE 4

97 THE OMEN

98 GARFIELD 2



SALUTES

BAMBOO!

AWIT AWARDS

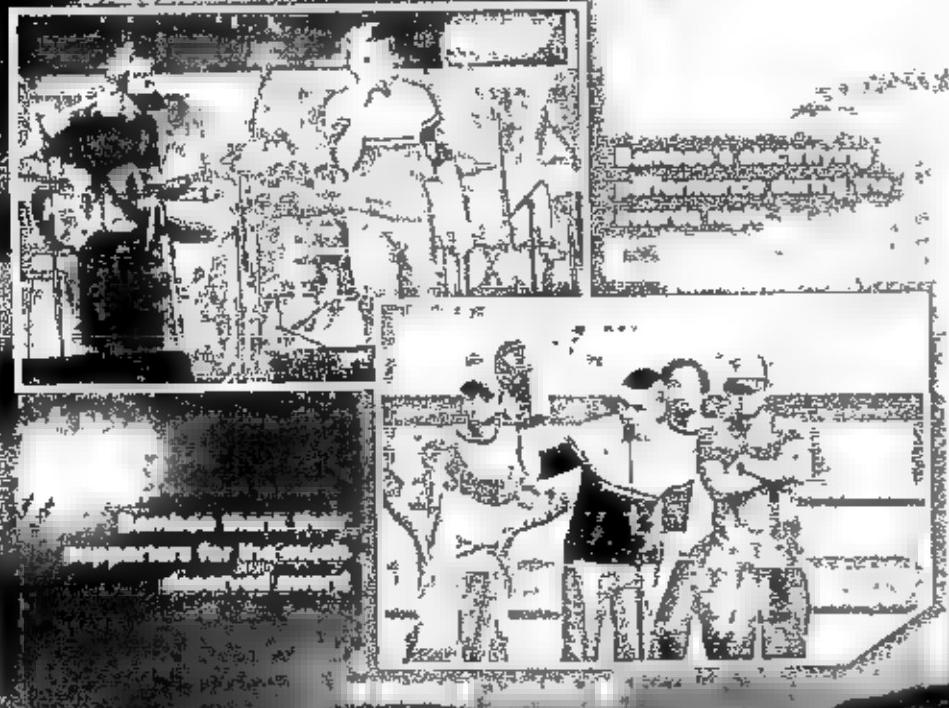
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In the recently held AWIT Awards ceremony, SMART Buddy got their fair share of glory. SMART Buddy congratulated Bamboo for bagging six major awards: Album of the Year (Light, Peace, Love), Best in Rock ("Hallelujah"), Best Song of the Year (Hallelujah), Best Ballad (Much HAD Been Said), Best Live Performance by a Group, and the People's Choice Award (Hallelujah).

The best definitely recognizes their kind. SMART Buddy, the number one prepaid service in the country, is very proud to have Bamboo as part of its winning family of endorsers.

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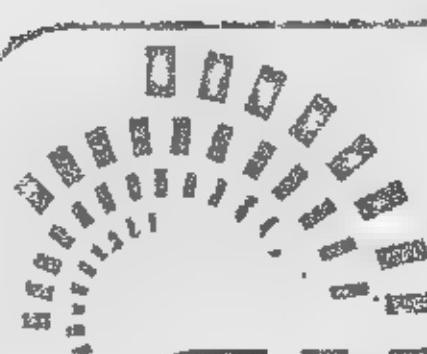
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A3

SATURDAY Special

Eye-catching picture book about the Constitution

By Nestor U. Torre

PARENTS AND TEACHERS WHO worry about Filipino youths' lack of awareness about nationhood and patriotism will be glad to know that a children's picture book has been published that seeks to make the Philippine Con-

stitution understandable and interesting to the country's young people.

Launched last June 19, the values formation book, titled "As a Filipino," is written and illustrated by Marcy Dans Lee, who was inspired by Maria Gonzales-Goolsby, Unionbank CSR execu-

tive director. The book is sponsored by Unionbank, Adarna House and the Department of Education.

Curriculum

It will be integrated into the public schools curriculum at the Grades 2 and 3 levels. Call 372-3548 or email adarnahouse@adarnahouse.com.ph.

With eye-catching illustrations and verses, Lee encourages young readers to think about such otherwise abstract concepts as God, Unity, Patriotism, Work, Respect for Life, Respect for Law and Government, Truth, Justice, Freedom, Love, Equality, Peace, Promotion of the Common Good, Concern for Family and Future Generations, Concern for the Environment, and Order.

The English verses come with a Tagalog translation.

"I am a Filipino," by Nina Luis Diego Lee and Antonia Beatrice Lee.

Despite the picture book's child-friendly look and tone, children reading it should be guided by their teachers or parents, to discuss and further clarify the topics and values it depicts.

Since "As a Filipino" is for children, its characters are all young, the better for children to relate to them.

Classes

Marcy Dans Lee's love for children's books began at a very young age, when she assisted in the summer art classes conducted by her mother, noted artist and educator Araceli Lumaco Dans.

After graduating from the UP College of Fine Arts, Marcy taught Art at the Maryknoll Child Study Center. Fusing her art with her experiences with children, she began writing and illustrating books for young readers.



LEE.
Exceptional
artistry and
love for
children.

Her first book, "Ibon, EOiseau des Philippines," was published in Paris, France, where she lived for four years. Returning to the Philippines, she taught at the UP College of Fine Arts and was the chairperson of its Department of Visual Communication.

In 1996, she established the UP Mindanao Cultural Center in Davao City, and taught Children's Literature there. Recently, she was appointed as head of UP Mindanao's Human Resources Development Office.

Marcy's other children's books include "Luis and the Enchanted Creatures," "The Crocodile and the Colorful Headbands," "Laon and the Seven-Headed Dragon," "The Girl Who Loved to Sing," and "Thrice as Nice."

3RD WEEK
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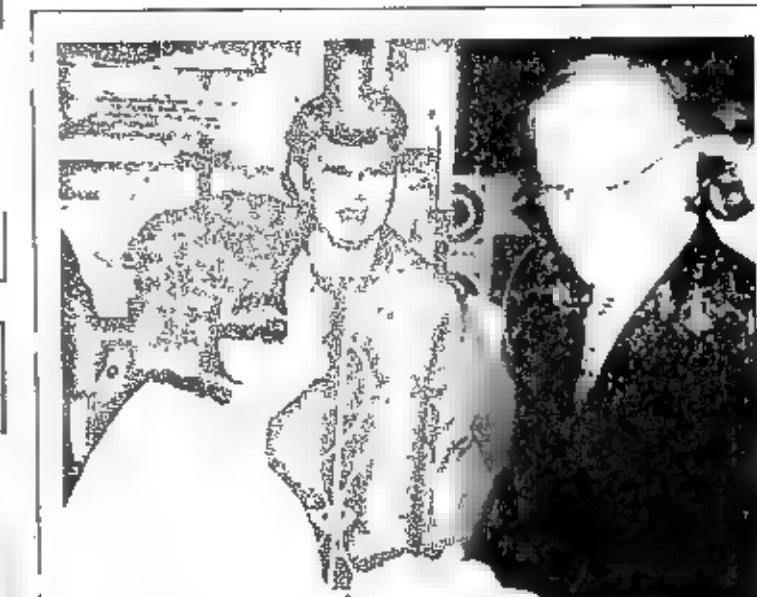
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"AS A FILIPINO." Child-friendly look and tone.



SILVER WEDDING VOWS

Two Filipino broadcast executives renewed their silver wedding vows in special rites at the Vatican, following a pilgrimage to Lourdes, France. RPN's Edith and IBC's Bob del Rosario were feted by a group of 15, including Anak TV officials, Edgardo Roces, Elvira Yap Go and Mag Cruz Hato. Ivy Violan honored the couple with Filipino love songs during the solemn exchange of vows held at the basement crypt of St. Peter's Basilica.

Following . . .

From page A3-6

among Gary's trademark dance steps. He adds, "When you're tired, you'll forget the stress because the adrenaline rush is so powerful. *Masaya talaga!*" The singing and dancing duo will soon collaborate on an album that features Gab's remixed versions of Gary's dance tunes.

Biggest fans

Fathers and sons concur that they are each other's biggest fans—but not necessarily their worst critics. "Bilib ako dahil sariling kiyod ang ginawa n'ya para

makuha ang gusto nya," Pen says of Ping, who shone as Kiyo Bogs in last year's "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros." "Sa pag-arte, may pinagmanahang Nagko-comment lang ako pag nagtatanong siya. Pinupuri ko 'pag kawiliw-puri."

Ping returns the compliment: "Sa lahat ng napapanood ko, magaling siya. Consistency is what I strive for."

Gab also gushes about Gary: "My dad is my idol—he's someone I look up to, and I'm very proud of him!"

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2 12:00, 2:15, 4:20, 6:20, 8:45, 10:00
3 12:00, 2:15, 4:20, 6:20, 8:45, 10:00
4 11:00, 2:30, 5:15, 7:30, 10:00
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SCARY MOVIE 4 3 12:00, 2:15, 4:20, 6:20, 8:45, 10:00, R13
LAKE HOUSE 4 12:00, 2:15, 4:20, 6:20, 8:45, 10:00, PG
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SECRETS OF THE CODE

SECRET OF THE CODE

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Caricatures still hold sway in local movies

By Boh Carvantes

AS THE BEARDED VILLAIN GUFFAWS, HE darts a lascivious look at the beautiful damsel in distress—his evil intentions clear for all to see! He leers at her cleavage and thighs with eyes that are as dark as they are fierce. His expression spells S-E-X—and our heroine is in grave danger! So, we pray that lightning hits him where it matters most. This isn't a man, this is a beast of the worst kind!

Predictable

I hate these predictable scenes. It's hard to sympathize with the abused woman. I wonder why she doesn't fight back and give him a good kick where it would hurt most. I wonder what goes on inside the actor's mind when he comes up with such ludicrous acting. I mean, gone are the days of melodrama when evil was black and virtue was as white as the driven snow.

What irritates me about these overdone scenes is that they are passé. So, why do directors keep including such sequences in their movies? Shouldn't actors know better when they are directed in such a manner?—Unless, of course, the scenes were meant as a spoof.

When these sequences appear, I remember the likes of Hollywood's Jack Elam and Ernest Borgnine, and, on the local scene, Johnny Montiero, Romy Diaz and Dick Israel. Even Eddie Garcia has created his vintage villainous characters. But, I'm surprised that this type of acting still reigns in the movies today, as many would-be Dick Israels continue to act in that same predictable manner.

Definition

Whenever a leading lady is to be mauled in a scene, she will most probably be abused by a character actor whose definition of "character" is limited to (very) bad acting. Subtlety has nothing to do with evil. The devil from hell has got to be black, and his role models are usually wild animals like foxes, apes, wolves—or thirsty, blood-sucking vampires. How tiresome!

Of course, lady villains do their own thing: They put on too much make-up, wear the highest heels, are dressed in slinky garb, and look like they've just come from the beauty salon. Everything is in place—except their morals!

And they are *mas-kay*, of course: *Mestizas* like Cherie Gil and Jackie Lou Blanco have taken over the roles once done to death by the likes of Bela Flores and Zeny Zabala.

Privilege

Those malditos not only had the "privilege" of slapping the leading lady, they even intended to steal the dashing leading man! However, in the late '70s, director Joey Gosiengfiao had the leading lady slap the evil woman back—what a surprise!

Guess what? Scores of movies soon after aped the (once effective) ut for rat slapping scene. But, as Cherie Gil enunciated so effected to Sharon Cuneta in another oft-copied scene, who needs "a second-rate, trying hard copycat?" —Another scene I am so tired of!

Tracing roots through public service

TO OBSERVE the late Eugenio Lopez Sr.'s 105th birth anniversary on July 20, his children has initiated four social development programs in Jaro to benefit the hometown of their father.

First is a six-month feeding program with Bantay Bata 163 to help reduce malnutrition in over 40 barangays. Second is an initiative to provide houses to 50 families.

Training

Third, to provide education and training for students and teachers in 15 public elementary and three public high schools through the combined efforts of the Knowledge Channel and the ABS-CBN Foundation. And fourth, a program for responsible parenthood that aims to provide health care and youth counseling.

Oscar M. Lopez, chairman of the Lopez Group of Companies, is sustaining his family's long history of philanthropy, public service, nationalistic involvement and entrepreneurship.

Email: mandynavasero@yahoo.com.ph, or call 899-1767

RIMA Lopez-Bautista and brother Jay Lopez help build a Gawad Kalinga house in Jaro



GIL. The first-rate villainess is no copycat, of course.

EFFECTS AT YOUR FEET

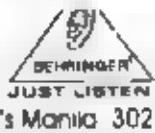
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let's Weather Together!



Ulan ng Saya sa QTV

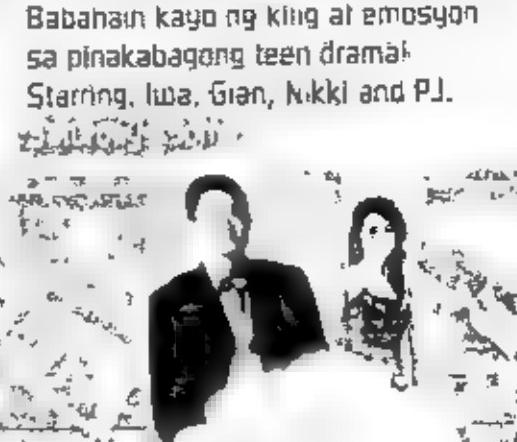
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SCAM

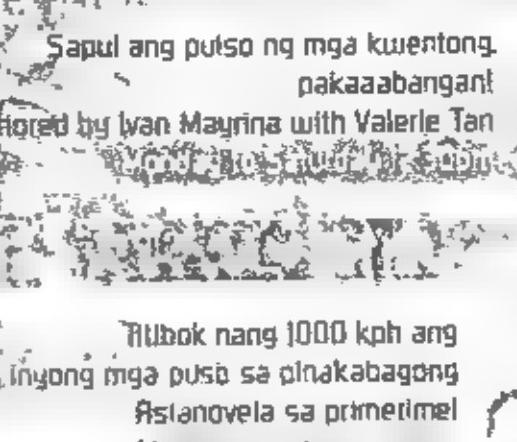
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SCAM

Patuloy ang pag-ulan ng mga tips para makalwas sa panegaganchol!

Hosted by Leo Martinez with Maureen Larrazabal



ABS-CBN
Channel 11

Blamin ang kabudlang deleye sa mga updates ni Heidi Habagat!

B1

RP ahead in Asean online gaming

Philippines outstrips tech-heavy neighbors in terms of revenue growth

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S ONLINE GAMING market grew sharply last year, outpacing its peers in even the more technologically advanced Asean countries, according to a leading telecommunications research firm.

In a statement, IDC said that the online gaming market in the Philippines grew by 72 percent in terms of revenues in 2005 from the previous year's level.

Total subscription revenues reached \$15.56 million, the market research outfit said.

This is, however, only a small fraction of the total market for online gaming in the Asia-Pacific, excluding Japan, which recorded a total of \$1.39 billion last year.

IDC said further growth is in the cards for both the country and the region, as a whole, once service providers get to develop new avenues for the market.

"The increasing popularity of casual games has given the market another new area to spur growth," it said in its report. "While Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORPGs) have been the mainstream game genre for the last few years, the space has begun to show early signs of maturity and, as such, online gaming providers have been quick to respond and address any potential saturation issues by varying game offerings to include more casual games in their product line."

"In the early days, MMORPG was the sole genre that derived revenue from content generating subscriptions," it added. "Casual online games, on the other hand, were either free or sourced revenue from advertising and sponsorships. However we've begun to see some concrete shifts towards alternative revenue streams."

In 2005, the Philippines held a 1.1-percent market share of the region's total subscription revenues, according to IDC. The region's market is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 21 percent from 2006 to 2010, reaching \$3.6 billion by 2010.

Also, the region's market is expected to breach the \$2-billion mark by 2007, with the entry of several new countries into the region's online gaming scene, specifically India, Indonesia and Vietnam.

BIR checks out non-operating firms

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE is set to conduct a nationwide investigation of corporate taxpayers claiming to have stopped business operations.

Nestor Valeroso, head of the BIR's Quezon City office, said that in one district in Quezon City alone, there were over a thousand firms that had declared to have stopped operations this year.

He said the huge number of firms that made such a claim was doubtful.

Valeroso, who has initiated the conduct of investigations in Quezon City, said Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag had agreed to widen the scope of the investigation, carrying it out nationwide, as a means to improve the revenue agency's tax collection.

Valeroso noted that false claims of "no operations" results in a double whammy for the government. Not only do false claims allow firms to escape payment of taxes, it also poses the danger of their clients' asking for input VAT credits from the government.

He said the BIR would enhance its database to closely monitor whether the receipts

used by taxpayers to claim input VAT credits are valid.

Valeroso said that cleaning up the BIR's database is necessary so that the revenue agency will be alerted every time a receipt presented by a taxpayer for credit claims is issued by a company that has already declared "no operations."

"This is one of the programs the BIR will do to increase tax collection and work on meeting the full-year target," Valeroso told the Inquirer.

The BIR is tasked to collect P675.4 billion this year, 25 percent higher than that of last year's actual collection of P542 billion.

The BIR is pressured to come up with measures to raise more taxes to meet its full-year target despite the shortfall posted in the first five months of the year.

BIR data showed that in the January-to-May period, tax collection stood at P268 billion, lower than the P272.2-billion target.

Meanwhile, the BIR has also extended the deadline for this year's No-Audit Program (NAP) until the end of the month, saying the measure has drawn interest from more taxpayers and is seen to help shore up the

BIR's tax collection.

NAP is a program that encourages taxpayers, especially delinquent ones, to voluntarily remit and increase their income tax payments in exchange for being allowed to escape tax audit by the BIR.

NAP is an annual program that will cover taxable periods 2004 to 2008. To escape tax audit under the NAP the BIR said, a major requirement is for a taxpayer to increase its income tax payment by 20 percent year-on-year.

For 2005 income tax liabilities, application for NAP was supposedly set only until May 15, 2006.

But the BIR, through Revenue Regulation No. 7-2006, has extended the deadline until June 30.

The BIR said the extension was made following a substantial number of requests from taxpayers, who want to avail of the program but have missed the deadline.

The NAP is consistent with the BIR's strategy of compromising with delinquent taxpayers for the government to immediately raise much-needed revenues and meet the P675.4 billion tax collection target for this year.

After Keppel, GE now eyeing Bankard

By Doris C. Dumiao

AFTER EARLIER BUYING OUT

Keppel Monte Bank, American global conglomerate General Electric plans to further expand its interests in the Philippines by buying out publicly listed credit card issuer Bankard Inc. from the Yuchengcos.

GE Consumer Finance, which recently launched its Philippine banking platform GE Money Bank, proposed to acquire all of the assets and certain liabilities of Bankard's credit card issuing and merchant acquiring businesses.

Bankard yesterday disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that its board of directors had ac-

cepted GE's proposal. But for the deal to push through, the imprimatur of Bankard stockholders will still be needed.

The credit issuer did not disclose the price considered for the transaction.

On July 28, the proposal shall be presented to stockholders during a meeting.

GE is bullish on banking opportunities in the Philippines—the first Asian country where it acquired a banking platform.

GE Consumer Finance bought out the 30-branch Keppel Monte Bank from Singapore's Keppel group for about P1.45 billion in December last year.

Earlier, the Rizal Commercial

Banking Corp. of the Yuchengcos family wanted to nullify its acquisition of Bankard from Equitable PCIBank on grounds that it had overpaid the bank in 1999.

In a petition to the Paris-based International Chamber of Commerce, RCBC Capital sued for about P610 million in damages plus interest.

RCBC Capital claimed it had overpaid PCIBank by about P600 million when it shelled out a total of P1.78 billion for 67 percent of Bankard.

EPCI Bank was sued for alleged breach of its warranties, including the fair and accurate presentation of its financial condition in 1999.

Planters Bank announces merger with microlender

By Doris C. Dumiao

THE TAMBUNTING FAMILY'S Planters Development Bank, the country's largest private development bank, is set to merge with Davao-based microfinance lender Micro Enterprise Bank (MEB) through a share swap deal.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor for bank supervision and examination Nestor Espenilla Jr. yesterday told reporters that the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board had approved the merger in principle during its meeting on Thursday.

Espenilla said Planters Bank would absorb the operations of MEB. Bullish on prospects for microfinancing lending in the Philippines, Planters Bank earlier took over management control of MEB from a German partner.

It bought out the Germans' shares after the former partners decided to refocus their investment and concentrate in South America and Eastern Europe.

Remaining as minority partners in MEB are the international Finance Corp. and the Dutch government-controlled Netherlands Development Finance Co.

PlantersBank chair and CEO Jesus Tambunting said MEB, an institution that supports the working and entrepreneurial poor, had big potential and should be expanded "in a big way."

"Microfinance has been proven to be successful all over the world," Tambunting said. "The collection ratio is about 94-95 percent, and if you're down to 90 percent, you're doing badly."

Planters Bank has total consolidated assets of P30 billion, capital of P2.9 billion and network of 70 branches. It has specialized on SME lending over the last 40 years.

PSALM to hedge part of \$7-B debt

By Abigail L. Ho

TO PROTECT ITSELF FROM THE effects of foreign exchange fluctuations, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) intends to do a currency hedge of between \$300 million and \$500 million of its outstanding obligations this year.

In an interview with reporters yesterday, PSALM president Nieves Osorio said that the government agency is now in talks with three to four foreign banks for the transaction.

"We're looking at the different currencies, so we can swap with another currency that will likely give us the least cost," Osorio said. "We've shortlisted three to four banks, all of which are not asking for any national government guarantee."

Right now, she said, PSALM is

looking at just a currency hedge. It is not considering other hedging structures, such as those that have to do with interest rates and the tenor of loans.

"We won't be touching the terms, just the currencies," Osorio said.

As of end-2005, PSALM's outstanding debts were placed at \$7.81 billion or P372 billion. At end-2004, these debts were pegged at \$6.66 billion, a net increment of around \$400 million.

Of the total debts, Osorio said 55 percent were in US dollars, 37 percent in yen, 5 percent in pesos, and the rest in other currencies.

Also, PSALM will again be tapping the debt market to raise \$700 million to fund the National Power Corp.'s maturing obligations this year.

Osorio said PSALM had actually wanted to raise a higher

amount "because we don't know what will happen to the market next year, and we don't know if we can borrow again (at that time.)

"The issue is more the market than our cash flows as, based on a recent discussion with the (Department of Finance), they think we only need that much."

The DOF is still reviewing the amount that PSALM has to raise for Napocor this year, she said.

Osorio added that what PSALM and the DOF have agreed on is that PSALM will be borrowing on its own and will not piggyback on the national government.

Napocor, through PSALM, last year borrowed close to \$800 million to finance its maturing obligations, as well as its capital expenditures and general funding requirements.

From page B1

BPI forms banking subsidiary . . .

While other banks tap the overseas Filipino market only for the remittances or cash transfer business, Dimayuga said BPI Direct would immediately provide as "pabaon" or send-off package to Filipino expatriates an international automated teller machine card, a BPI Mastercard credit card and a 24/7 counseling service to assist them in managing their finances.

To date, BPI estimates that it has cornered about a quarter of the OFW remittance market, making it among the top three players.

He said BPI Direct would like to see more households, which are benefiting from overseas remittances, save more money in banks instead of spending everything on consumption.

Based on a Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas survey on Metro Manila-based households, only about 11 percent of households supported by OFWs attempt to invest in stocks or any private business but a larger 39 percent keep savings in banks and other depository institutions.

For instance, he said the new savings bank had tied up with affiliate Avida, a unit of Ayala Land Inc., to provide special housing financing for this market. Given the huge potential of its targeted niche, BPI Direct expects to grow its deposit and loan portfolio by 50 percent a year.

Gov't hopeful on return . . . From page B1

will normalize compared to what we've seen in previous months," said Teves, who graced the launching of the Bank of the Philippines Islands' new bank for overseas Filipino workers, BPI Direct Savings.

"If we continue to improve on our market fundamentals, the Philippines would be among the serious countries to consider if they decide to move back their capital

to emerging markets," he said.

As such, Teves said peso-denominated government securities would again be able to attract more foreign investors.

"I'm hoping that things will change in the next few weeks," he said.

At present, fund managers are selling assets in emerging markets on expectations of further increases

in US interest rates, contrary to earlier hopes that the two-year monetary tightening in the world's biggest economy was at its tailend.

With a few days to go before the end of the first semester, Teves said the Department of Finance was working double-time to attain its revenue targets and sustain the over-performance in its cash budget position. Doris C. Dumiao

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2006



INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

IAEB No. 2005-020 - Goods

ACQUISITION OF FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT FOR BRANCH TELLER PROJECT (4TH PHASE)

Project Description	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) & Source of Fund	Date/Time Pre-bid Conference	Deadline Opening of Envelopes/Bids	Price of Bids Documents (non-refundable)
Supply, delivery & installation of 12 Teller's Booth and Accessories to various SSS Branches	P12,214,410.00 CAPEX: Furniture & Equipment	July 07, 2006 2:30 p.m.	July 21, 2006 3:00 p.m.	P10,000.00
Supply, delivery & installation (actual location) of fifty (50) units Fireproof Cash Vault to various SSS Branches	P2,622,200.00 CAPEX Furniture & Equipment	July 07, 2006 3:00 p.m.	July 21, 2006 3:00 p.m.	P2,500.00
Supply, delivery & installation (actual location) of fifty (50) units Money/Bill Counter to various SSS Branches	P1 750,000.00 CAPEX: Furniture & Equipment	July 07, 2006 3:30 p.m.	July 21, 2006 3:00 p.m.	P1,500.00

- Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
- The SSS now invites Bids from eligible bidders for the proposed acquisition of the above equipment. Supply, delivery and installation of the GOODS are required within forty-five (45) calendar days after contract signing/recief of Purchase Order (PO). The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents. Instruction to Bidders (ITB).
- Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (RA. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (RA. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
- Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee. The method of payment will be on a cash basis payable at the SSS Cashiering Department SSS Main Bldg., Ground Floor, upon accomplishment of SSS Form R-16. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

5. The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the Green Room, 12th Floor SSS Main Building on the deadline specified above. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and amount indicated in the Tender Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

6. Bid opening shall be held at the Green Room, 12th Floor SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the given address.

7. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

8. Bids and Awards Committee
The Secretariat:
6th Floor SSS Main Building
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel # 622-2891 2224 7380 920-6401 local 3491
Email - bac@sss.gov.ph
Facsimile number - (02) 924-7380

THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

[PDH June 24, 2006]

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF P-FOUR, INC.

Notice is hereby given that P-FOUR, INC. will file with the Securities and Exchange Commission a Certificate of Amendment of Articles of Incorporation shortening its corporate life to April 30, 2005.

Any person who may have a claim against said corporation may present the same to the undersigned at c/o ALPAP 1 Bldg., 5th Floor, 140 L.P. Leviste Street Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City.

This announcement serves as notice to all parties concerned of the dissolution of said Company.

(Sgd.) ALELI MILITSALA-BONIOL
Corporate Secretary
P-FOUR, INC.

[PMI - June 13 & 24, 2006]

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NOTICE OF LOSS
This is to inform the public that 1 pc. of C.T.C. with serial no 24236753 (original, duplicate & triplicate) issued to Brgy. Ibayo, Marilao, Bulacan was lost. Any transaction with said C.T.C. if used shall be considered forged, not valid and will no longer be honored. If found, kindly inform the concerned barangay w/ lot. no. 044-711-4417
(PDH June 24, 2006)

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TransCo

National Transmission Corporation

SECTION I. INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation
SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF
JET A-1 AVIATION FUEL (for One Year)
Ref. No. PB060329-PP0047

- The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO) through the 2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board, intends to apply the sum of Php 16,360,313.90 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for PR No. ATC-06-00007-6258. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
- The TRANSCO-HO now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply and delivery of Jet A-1 fuel. Delivery of the GOODS is required as follows: Intra-plane Deliveries: within 24 hours from receipt of notice from TransCo; Drawn Deliveries: within five (5) calendar days from receipt of notice from TransCo. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents. ITB.
- Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (RA. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (RA. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from June 24, 2006 to July 06, 2006 at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 2,000.00. The method of payment will be Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder.
- The TRANSCO-HO will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on July 5, 2006/9:00 a.m. at the address below. Requests for clarifications on the bid documents should be submitted before the Pre-bid Conference.
- Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before July 21, 2006/10:00 a.m. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following forms and amount or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

FORM OF SECURITY	
1. Cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of ABC)	PhP 163,603.14
2. Bank guarantee (1.9% of ABC)	PhP 245,404.71
3. Surety Bond (2.5% of ABC)	PhP 409,007.85
4. Foreign government guarantee	PhP 16,360,313.90

7. Bid opening shall be on July 21, 2006/10:00 a.m. at the Admin Conference Room same address before Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

8. The National Transmission Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa - BAC Chairman
MMD Office, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg.
corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 981-2297 / Fax No. (632) 922-8432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

[PDH - June 24, 2006]

Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation
South Luzon Operations and Maintenance

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Construction of Lineman's Operator's Villa at Batangas Substation

[TRANS-06-CLVB-S-E0-04-PB2]

The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM through the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) intends to apply the sum of Three Million Four Hundred Eighty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Forty Five & 82/100 (PhP3,487,478.82) being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Construction of Lineman's Operator's Villa at Batangas Substation. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM now invites potential Bidders to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and apply for eligibility for the construction of Lineman's Operator's Villa at batangas substation. Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license with License Particular of at least: "Category D & C, General Building" and Registration Particular of at least: "Small Building & Industrial Plant," must have at least completed a single contract similar to the contract to be bid involving experience in construction of all types of building, i.e. housing, schools, hospitals, market, multi-storey buildings, airport terminals & other related structures. The value of which should be at least 50% of the ABC and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements set out in the eligibility documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for submission of eligibility documents shall be on the same date of the opening of Eligibility documents: July 07, 2006, 1:30 P.M. at the address mentioned in the next succeeding paragraphs. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Document. Completion of the work is required by 125 calendar days.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (RA. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR Part A of RA 9184, only bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below, starting June 15-July 04, 2006 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PhP1,000.00. They shall submit their accomplished Eligibility documents on or before July 07, 2006, 1:30 P.M. at the stated address. Eligibility Screening shall be held on July 07, 2006, 1:30 P.M. at the OAVP Conference Room B of the stated address.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO) and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on July 28-31, 2006.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PhP2,000.00. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative starting July 28-31, 2006, 8:00 A.M.- 5:00 P.M.

The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on Aug. 03, 2006, 8:30 A.M. at the OAVP Conference Room B of Transco SLOM, San Vicente, Batangas, Laguna.

Deadline for submission of bids is on August 17, 2006, 9:30 A.M. at the address below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the prescribed form indicated under Section 27.2 of RA. 9184. Bid opening shall be on the same date August 17, 2006, 9:30 A.M. at the OAVP Conference Room B of Transco SLOM. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation - South Luzon Operations & Maintenance Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)
San Vicente, Batangas, Laguna 4024
Mr. Ruben G. Castuera - BAC Chairman
(02) 981-4578 to 78 local 4084; 4086; 4053
rgcastuera@transco.ph
(02) 981-4578 to 78 local 4007
www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) RUBEN G. CASTUERA
BAC Chairman

[PDH - June 14 A.M. 2006]



TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines

EDET Project

Tender No. LCB - EDET - 01-06

Training Equipment, Tools and Accessories in Lots:

Lot 0b - Food Processing	PhP 12,240,000.00 (A, B, C)
Lot 11 - Tourism	PhP 10,060,000.00 (A, B, C)

The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a credit from KfW towards the cost of the Expansion of Dual Education and Training (EDET) being carried out by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) if intends to apply this credit for payments under the contract for Eleven (11) lots

OBITUARIES

B3

With faith in the Resurrection
we announce the death of our mother

**HERMELINDA VILLANUEVA
RAMOS DIZON**

Born in Bacolod City on 02 March 1913 and died in Bacolod City on 21 June 2006
of cardiac arrest.

She is survived by her three children, Rodolfo, R. Rolando FSC and Josefina.

Her remains lie in state at the Chapel of Hope
Rolling Hills Memorial Park, Bacolod City.

The Mass of the Resurrection will be celebrated on Monday, 26 June 2006, 8:30AM
at the Carmelite Monastery, Mandalagan, Bacolod City.

Interment follows.

In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate donations for scholarships in her memory.
Please make checks payable to J.R. Dizon Foundation.

In Loving Memory

on her 1ST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

June 24, 2005

NICANORA DOBLE-DE LUNA

Botolan, Zambales

Her children Noel & Rose, Ruben & Bel, Paul & Kitty, Francis & Marlin, and Ma. Teresa; grandchildren Lee, Kim, Lin, Carlo, Abigail, Monica, Patrick Ian, her friends and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Mass will be offered today at San Isidro Labrador Church, Nangka, Marikina City at 7:00 a.m.

Seven Years Ago Today

Our Beloved Mama

MARIA KOO TAN

Joined the Lord in Eternal Rest

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be celebrated in her memory and that of our Papa, Salvador Tan Sioung Chang, today at the following churches:

Catarman Cathedral 5:30 AM
Mary The Queen (Greenhills) 6:00 PM
Sanctuario de San Jose (Greenhills) 6:15 PM
Chapel of the Eucharistic Lord (Megamall) 12:15 PM
Sanctuario del Santo Cristo (Blumentritt) 7:30 AM
St. Francis Church (Mandaluyong) 7:00 AM
St. John The Baptist 6:00 PM

Thank you once again for your prayers and well wishes.

Edward, Robert & Jenny, Ronnie (†) & Marge, Renan & Iris
Ales & Mily, Stanley & Jen, Sandy and Steve
Eddie & Noah, Doy, Square & Kay & Candice
Aida & Albert (Simatoco), Arvin & Malou, Archie & Barbie, & Aris
Tommy & Marge, Bernice, Adrian & Melissa
Eday & Boy (Gustillo) & Gail
Nonoy & Grace, Trisha, Felicity, Valerie, Nonoy & Bogy
and great grandchildren.

Message of Thanks

The family of

DR. ALEX B. TIRONA
of Cavite City

is deeply touched and grateful
for the tremendous thoughtfulness, love
and sympathy given by his relatives,
colleagues, patients and friends.
May God bless them all!

"Come to Me, all you who are weary...
and burdened; and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

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On the Eve of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

A. JUDITH LUCIANO LEDESMA

was peacefully called from her valiant pilgrimage of 58 years.

Her mother, Justice Leonor Ines-Luciano;

Her children, Elaine, Nikki, Carla, Tara, and Maryanne;

Her grandchildren, Noelle and Nikka;

Her siblings, Ging and Eddie, Chichos and Nanett,

Sito and Marilyn, and Clem and EQ;

Her other relatives and friends, and the numerous people whose lives she had touched and served with Mother Teresa's Christ-like love, especially the mountain people of Siniloan and the prisoners of San Juan Town Jail,

request the pious readers

to pray for her speedy welcome into

God's Kingdom of Eternal Joy.

Her remains lie in state at the parish of the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Broadway St., Q.C. Interment will be at the crypt of said Church on Sunday, June 25, 2006 after the 2:00 p.m. funeral Mass.

MANUEL VICENTE KOHANAP BRIONES

a loving and dedicated father passed away
on Saturday, June 10, 2006.

Manuel, known to most as Noli was born on March 24, 1944 in the Philippines. He earned his Engineering Degree from Mapua Institute of Technology and received his MBA from Asia Institute of Management (AIM). After much traveling, he eventually settled his family in the United States. Moving to New York, New Jersey and then to Arizona permanently.

At the time of his demise, he was a member of The Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration, USA; member of The New Jersey Society of Professional Engineers; and a Registered Professional Mining Engineer, USA.

Manuel will be sadly missed but lovingly remembered. His generosity and kind heart were an inspiration to his family. He lived his life with integrity and bravery.

Mr Briones is survived by his loving wife Gloria; two daughters, Christine and Marion Lee; a son, Frank; a son-in-law, Eugene Lee; his sisters, Remelina, Angelita, Longina and Wilhelmina; brothers, Josevero and Nicolario; in-laws, nephews and nieces; grandnephews and grandnieces.

His remains will lie in state on Monday and Tuesday, the 26th and 27th of June, 2006, respectively, at the Saint Jerome Chapel/Sta. Susana Church, Alabang, Metro Manila. Funeral Services will be held on Wednesday, June 28, 2006 at 9:00 am and interment will follow at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Paranaque, Metro Manila.

"My soul finds rest in God alone, my salvation comes from Him,
He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken."

Psalm 62:1

**CHUA KOK HIONG
a.k.a. PHILIP UY**

Powerfully joined our Lord Jesus Christ
on June 21, 2006 at the age of 52.

His wife Se Han, children Ryan (eldest son), Michelle, Christian and Lynne; his parents, brothers, sister and friends give thanks to the Lord for the blessing of his life.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City
Interment will be on June 26, 2006, 9:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park, Daemarifit, Cainta.

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A child's brain development optimized through music

By Tessa R. Salazar

WHOM COULD HAVE thought the musically inclined would also do well with a scalpel or a protractor? According to studies cited by US-licensed educator Jeannie H. Castillo, 66 percent of music majors who apply to medical school are admitted. The best engineers and technical designers in Silicon Valley are nearly without exception practicing musicians.

Furthermore, she adds, the world's top academic countries place a premium on music education. Children in countries like Hungary, Netherlands and Japan take their music lessons seriously.

From these, Castillo boldly concludes a direct co-relation between the inclination to music and the ability to excel in various other fields.

Stimulating brain dev't

Castillo, who teaches children up to 7 years old at her new Kindermusik studio in Cubao, Quezon City, revealed in a recent press conference how music and interaction stimulate the overall brain development of a child in a way that nothing else can.

Castillo says that when a child is exposed to early stimulation—whether they're talked to by parents, held, sung to, danced with or engaged in play—synapses, or the connections between neurons in a child's brain, are created and stimulated.

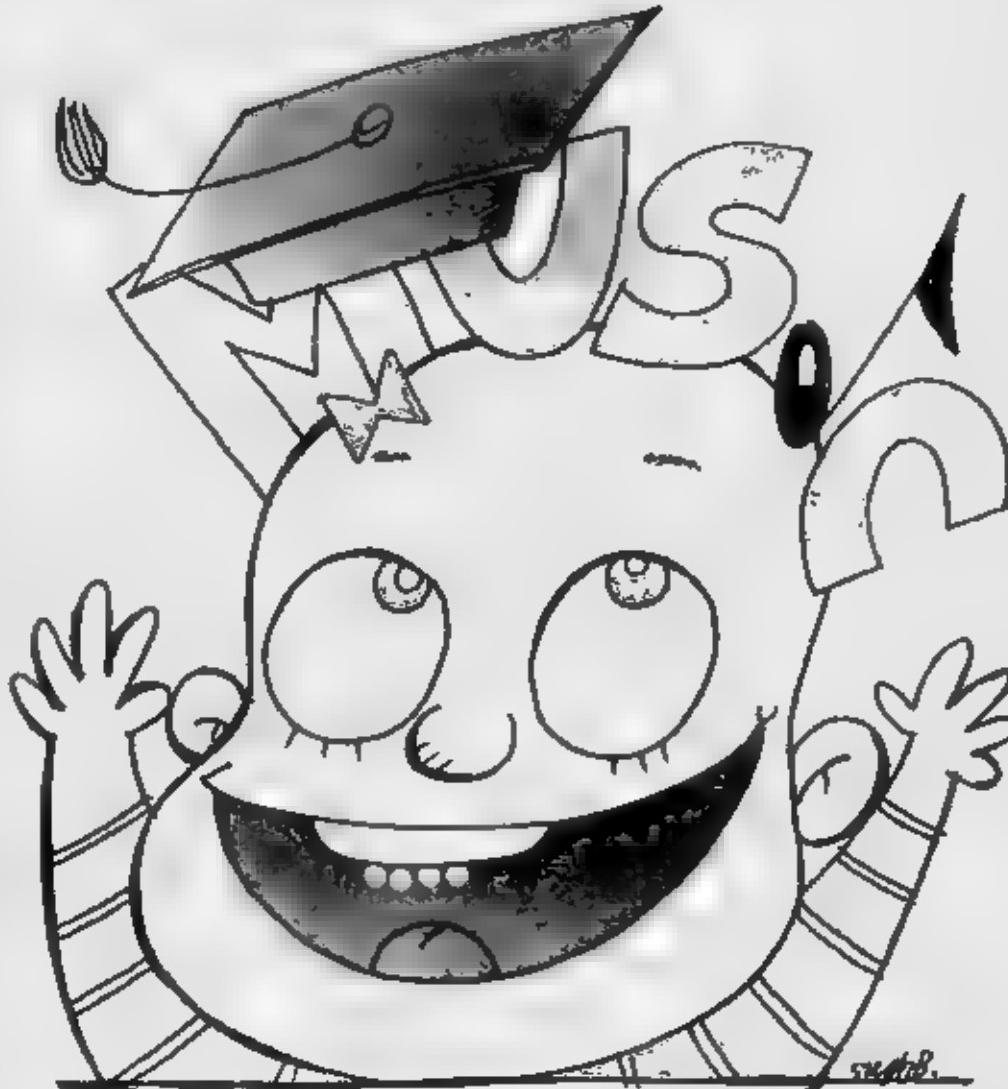
She adds that the more a child interacts with a parent or teacher, the more connections are created between neurons, paving the way for brain development.

And then there's music, which seems to play an important role in a child's emotional development.

"When a child is exposed to music, his or her emotions are engaged. There's an emotional component to music that makes people happy, especially when this music is experienced with a parent or caregiver that the child feels comfortable with. The child learns through the limbic system," she says.

Primed for learning

Castillo adds that when a child feels positive emotions with the person who is teaching them, when they are listening to music that



makes them feel happy, their brain is primed for learning.

"Taking it a step further, when a child is held or danced with or encouraged to play with musical instruments, it also works the motor development area of their brain," she says.

Castillo explains this develops a child's physical skills, and enhances the child's ability to listen.

"Being able to develop an acute sense of hearing and knowing how to listen is related to language development," she says.

Brain activities

Castillo says music engages both sides of the brain. The area that connects the two sides of the brain, the corpus callosum can be 5 to 15 percent larger for children who are

posed to music than those who are not.

Dr. Elizabeth Ventura, professor and chair of the UP Department of Psychology, says magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) results from musicians engaged in their craft show activity in all areas of their brains.

"Music and interaction are like cross training for children's brains, so there are more neural connections developed. The more they engage in music, the stronger the neural connections will be," Castillo says.

Stronger and more neural connections, she says, serve like "information superhighways" when the children become adults. Brain signals and external stimuli travel faster.

In a way, music helps "pave" these superhighways, so other skills related to reading, math and critical thinking are better facilitated.

Study results serve as guide for schizo treatment

By Charles E. Baban

WHEN FACED WITH THE fact that the first chosen antipsychotic drug is not effective or has intolerable side effects, both doctors and patients alike struggle to decide which drug to try next.

But thanks to the results of the second phase of the Antipsychotic Trials of Intervention Effectiveness (Catie) study, the question of which drug to try next may now be just a bit easier to answer.

The second Catie study, whose results were published in April, found that many schizophrenia patients who don't respond well to their first chosen antipsychotic medication improved after switching to a second medication.

The Catie study is the largest, longest and most comprehensive independent trial ever done to examine existing therapies for schizophrenia involving more than 1,400 patients in a span of 18 months at 57 medical facilities and funded by the US government rather than pharmaceutical companies.

Guide

"With the results of the first and second phase already known, doctors, patients and their families will now have a guide on which drug will fit the patient's situation best and what side effects to expect," says Dr. Jose Tablante, Eli Lilly Philippines medical director.

In the first phase, nearly three-fourths of the patients did not complete the supposed 18-month long trial for any one of the following reasons: inadequate effectiveness in controlling their symptoms, intolerable side effects or their own decision not to continue.

The drugs that showed benefits throughout the two phases of the Catie trial include Eli Lilly's olanzapine (Zyprexa) wherein test patients were "less likely to be hospitalized for a psychotic relapse and tended to stay on the medication longer than patients taking other medications."

However, researchers noted that olanzapine patients also experienced weight gain as well as increase in total cholesterol and triglyceride levels than patients taking the other drugs.

Evaluating tradeoffs

Tablante says the result only show why it is very important for doctors and patients alike to carefully evaluate the tradeoffs between efficacy and side effects and the study results may serve as a guide.

"Prior to the Catie study, doctors and patients don't have an idea how patients should be subsequently treated when one drug did not perform as expected and how the drugs compare to each other has not been well established. Because of the phase 2 study, a patient who didn't do well on one drug for a particular reason, is now provided with information on what drug to choose next," he adds.

Schizophrenia is a chronic, recurrent mental illness, characterized by hallucinations, delusions, and disordered thinking. Previous studies have demonstrated that taking antipsychotic medication is far more effective than taking no medicine at all, and that taking it consistently is essential to the long-term treatment of this severe, disabling disorder.

Although the medications alone are not sufficient to cure the disease, Tablante explains they are necessary to manage it.

Cell phone use linked to brain tumors?

Conflicting results

Some researchers seem to suggest that the increased incidence of brain tumors during the last decade or so is attributable to cell phone use. Preliminary data would show that the brain tumor is usually located on the side where the patient would use his/her cell phone.

But results from studies have been conflicting. Last year, the Dutch Health Council, reviewing all available data from all over the world, found no conclusive evidence that radiation from mobile phones and TV towers was harmful. A four year British survey released early this year also showed no link between regular, long-term use of cell phones and brain tumor.

These earlier publications seemed reassuring to cell phone users until researchers at the Swedish National Institute for Working Life observed in their study that the use of mobile phones over

a long period of time can raise the risk for brain tumors, contradicting the conclusions of earlier researches.

The Swedish researchers looked at the mobile phone use of 905 people between the age of 20 and 80 who had been diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumor, and they found a link with their cell phone use.

The study noted that 85 of these 905 cases were so-called high users of mobile phones, that is they began early to use mobile and/or wireless telephones and used them a lot. Similar to the observations of previous studies, the tumors were more prevalent on the side of the head where the phone was said to be used.

Increased risk

Dr. Kjell Mild, head investigator of the study, said the figures meant that heavy

users of mobile phones, accumulating 2,000 hours or more of cell phone use in their life, had a 240 percent increased risk for a malignant tumor on the side of the head the phone is used. In practical terms, if one uses cell phones an average of one hour a day (total daily use), he would have a 240 percent risk of developing a brain tumor in 5.4 years compared to nonusers of cell phones.

Dr. Mild suggested that to get the risk down, one should use hands-free phones but other experts don't seem to agree. They hypothesize that hands-free devices even serve as an antenna that attract more EMF radiation.

Another important observation in some of these studies is that children and younger people are more vulnerable to EMF waves due to their relatively thinner skulls, which are still maturing and growing. With the unlimited text and call promos available in our country, many youngsters spend minutes and sometimes hours making "telebabab" on their cell phones. This can pose a potential problem later on.

Inadequate disclosure

Since hands-free devices don't seem to offer any protection, the only safeguard I can think of at this point to minimize EMF radiation from cell phones is to use it only when it's necessary. If a landline is available, then we should use it instead of the cell phone.

And just like the cigarette manufacturers, the network providers (Globe, Smart, and Sun) should also have a line at the bottom of their advertisements stating something like: "Preliminary evidence suggests that accumulated exposure to cell phone radiation might increase the risk of brain tumors." This should free them from any liability of inadequate disclosure which cell phone users who eventually develop brain tumors might file against them.

Now read, not just watch, Discovery Channel

Small chambers

But where did the word "cell" come from? When scientist Robert Hooke, who trained as a painter, observed magnified pieces of cork (yes, cork!) under the microscope, he saw rows of little boxes reminiscent of bees' honeycomb. With artistic ingenuity he drew and dubbed them cells, meaning small chambers (think of a cell in a jail). By the way, if you want to look at cells for yourself, you don't need cork. Slice an onion, peel off an inner layer and study under a lens. And quick: What's another name for a bacteria party? A cell-abration, of course.

Speaking of cells, all cells, including ours, are really 90 percent water, with the rest divided among protein, carbohydrate, fat, nucleic acid. We start out when a bold male sperm cell makes contact with the mother's egg cell, dividing merrily away until different kinds of cells are formed. (The heart beats for the first time 21 days after fertilization.)

EUREKA!

Queena N.
Lee-Chua

tended for US grades 5 to 9; I recommend them for Filipino students in Grade 4 up, though smart younger kids will also benefit, and of course, teachers and parents can use them to up on the basics and catch up with what's new.

Traveled back in time

"In Twisted: The Genetics Files," I traveled back in time to meet Gregor Mendel and his peers; James Watson and Francis Crick and the DNA double helix; and what's more, even rode a wild ride on the molecule itself, replete with blow-by-blow descriptions of its constituents. Did you know that we carry 100 billion

miles of DNA in our body?

I eavesdropped on an interview with Dolly, the first cloned sheep, and with a pang realized that she would not survive long after this. (I hope Discovery Channel updates this book to include Dolly's recent death.) Along with twins (identical twins do not have the same fingerprints) and clones (a la "Jurassic Park"), then I met John Merrick, the so-called Elephant Man (immortalized in the movie of the same name), with a growth on his face resembling a tusk, and the vampire, who might have suffered from a rare disease called congenital erythropoietic porphyria, which made the victim extremely sensitive to light (hence, Dracula's preference for the night). What's more, according to Canadian biochemist David Dolphin, garlic would make the disease worse.

Two other books in the series, "React: The Nuclear Energy Files" and "Conserve: The Natural Resources Files" segue from Einstein, fusion, the atomic

bomb, nuclear reactors to half life, X-rays, uranium, nuclear power; and from redwood forests, natural parks, John Muir to recycling, toxic smog, pollution, reforestation, respectively.

Very reasonable price

Last year, after obtaining the copyright, Anvil Publishing came out with these four books, which are available in major bookstores. Best of all, each volume is priced at a very reasonable P95, to make science accessible for all. For more information, call Anvil at 637-3621 or 747-1622 (ask for Gwenn or Lory) or e-mail at anvilpublishing@yahoo.com.

And by the way, by the time it takes you to finish this column, more than 300 million cells will have died inside you. But don't panic—around the same number are being created. We are all dying and being born at every moment.

E-mail the author at blessbook@yahoo.com.

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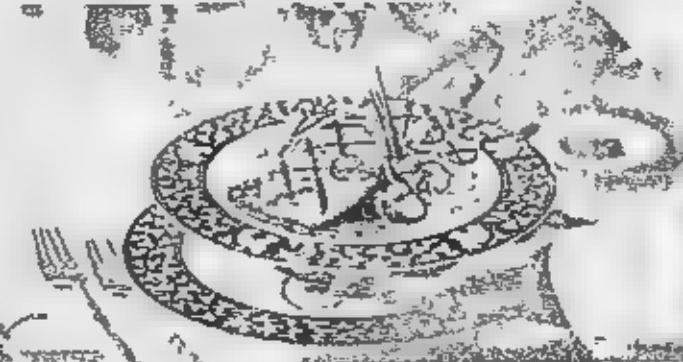
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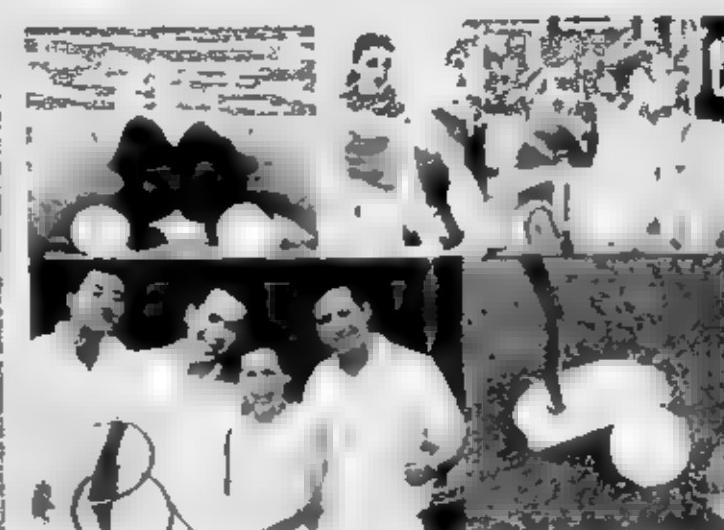


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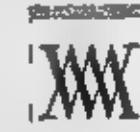


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PROPERTY

Middle class housing amid business area

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE BACKBONE OF THE nation—the middle class—should be able to afford a housing program near their workplace.

For architect Gilbert C. Yu, that housing program isn't just near the workplace. It's at the center of it. Yu and his firm G&W Architects and Associates offer a build-to-own scheme, provide direct cost, and eliminate the middleman to bring down the cost of housing.

G&W Architects and Associates, which caters to a broad spectrum of the middle class and the "entry-level" A class, features clients that fit the economic profile of bank branch managers.

His project, The Grand Hamptons at Crescent West Fort Bonifacio Global City, has a starting price of P2.3 million on a P17,217.51 monthly payment scheme for a 46-square-meter bedroom unit, and a high-end two-bedroom unit of 77.91 sq m that goes for P3.9 million, or P29,187.95 per month.

His lot portions, he says, were bought at a "high price."

According to him, city-centered homes for the middle class go for P2 million.

Affordable

"The homeowner might probably afford a down payment of 10 percent, or P200,000, then have the P1.8 million amortized, which is around P19,000 a month. *Kayang kaya yan* (That's affordable)," he says.

Yu also suggests that with a subsidized government land and a build-to-own method, one can afford a home at the center of where he or she works, which will give buyers a "quality time for their children."

"Right now they travel two to four hours back and forth, they will have a very unusual family way of life because they are not with their kids in their homes," he says.

According to Yu, the build-to-own scheme provides a home buyer an alternative to the "monopolized old system." It allows technical people like architects, engineers, contractors and suppliers to serve buyers directly, instead of dealing with middlemen.

He adds that this new system will respect other legitimate professionals like realtors and property brokers.

In-city development

Phinma Property Holdings Corp., known during its early years as a developer of high-end projects such as Manila Polo Club Townhouses, Mariposa Villas and Mariposa Square, has concretized what it says is its social responsibility: the affordable medium-rise housing project in urban areas for young families, self-employed individuals and overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

Phinma Property Holdings' medium-rise Spazio Bernardo at a 1.6-hectare property on Mindanao Avenue, Quezon City—a 10-minute ride from SM City North Edsa—offers 30-sq-m units at a cost of P575,000 on its higher floors, true to its slogan "City Living Made Easy."

Its other development Sunny Villas, near Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, costs even lower at P440,000 for a 30-sq-m unit.

Phinma Property president and CEO Willie J. Uy says that when his group started with low-cost horizontal housing projects during President Cory Aquino's time, they were in San Pedro and Cavite.

Uy says that though home buyers were happy to have their own houses, it took them up to three hours to commute from their home to their place of work. Quality time with the family was gone.

Building system

"So we sent our engineers to other Southeast Asian countries to see what kind of housing is suitable for people living in the urban areas. We saw that the only way to go was vertical. We had to look for a building system because the cost of land in Metro Manila is high," Uy says.

Phinma decided on a cast-in-place European-based technology which he describes as good as high-end developments in Metro Manila.

This building system enables the developer to finish units quickly. Spazio Bernardo, with 957 units (at over 11 buildings), was completed in just 9 months.

Cast in place is a high-tech "buhos on site," which affords a fast 18 hours per floor work rate, said Grant Orbeta, PPHC assistant vice president for marketing and design.

Orbeta adds that the units are modular-type. An owner has an option to have a bigger unit by purchasing two 30-sq-m units and joining them.

Earthquake resistant

Uy says this system enables PPHC to deliver low-cost condo housing projects around the country at a much faster rate without resorting to cheap construction materials and questionable quality of finished products.

PPHC claims its projects are found to be compliant with Zone 4 earthquake standards being the highest level of earthquake resistance.

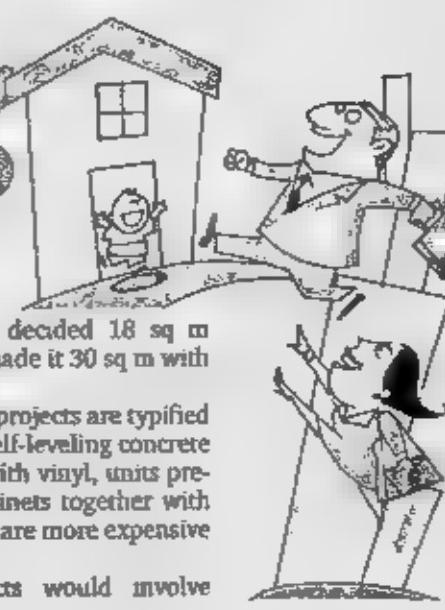
The PPHC's five-story condo building projects such as Smile Citibimes, Smile Annex, Sunny Villas and Spazio Bernardo all use this system of construction.

"By law, if you go into low-cost housing, the minimum is 18 sq m (according to Batasang

Pambansa 220) but we decided 18 sq m would be too small. We made it 30 sq m with one bedroom," says Uy.

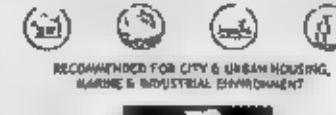
Phinma's medium-rise projects are typified by aluminum windows, self-leveling concrete for floors for flat finish with vinyl, units pre-painted, and kitchen cabinets together with toilets. The ground floors are more expensive than the upper floors.

Phinma's next projects would involve building 36-sq-m units.



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Post occupancy evaluation and green buildings

IF YOUR BUILDING HAD A REPORT card to check what works and what doesn't, how would it fare? Will it get a passing or a failing grade? For that matter how do you rate or evaluate a building?

In most cases, buildings are meticulously studied and analyzed during the design phase. Countless man-hours are spent studying the external design and the building systems that will keep the building running. Once the building is completed, minimal evaluation is done, and if done at all, the study is focused on the building itself excluding the needs of the occupants.

What happens when buildings are not evaluated after their completion? The following are classic examples.

We have many buildings where the occupants learn to cope with unwanted sunlight in their work areas. They cover their windows with all sorts of devices to shield themselves from the harsh tropical sun. They hang banners, posters, cardboards, old blinds, etc. Most designers are not aware of these effects based on their designs. Through post occupancy evaluation, these flaws are brought out.

Another similar example would be the use of excessive daylight in the building. If not properly handled with shading and light control, this can cause excessive glare for workers, especially those working with computers. This could result in low productivity.

Excessively low temperature that makes occupants literally freeze can also be as harmful to workers' health and productivity, just as very high, humid temperatures can also affect occupants' performance.

What is post occupancy evaluation?

Post occupancy evaluation (POE), first used over 25 years ago, is a comprehensive and systematic evaluation of a building's design—especially green buildings—after it has been built and occupied for some time. It is the most effective way for architects and the entire design team to see if the building functions well.

Main goal

Post occupancy evaluation is a powerful

GREEN ARCHITREND

Amado de Jesus



Qualitative analysis

While case studies on building systems done in the 1970s and 1980s focused on the technical performance of buildings, the latest step in post occupancy evaluation emphasizes a holistic, process-oriented approach to evaluation that includes not only the facilities but also the political, economic and social aspects that affect the building and its occupants.

Purposes of POE

The POE can be used to check if a building design is functional or appropriate and if it conforms with the building's performance requirements. Examples can include the required cooling temperature in the board room or the right speed of the elevators during peak hours.

Another purpose is to adjust programs for identical and repetitive facilities. Through the POE, improvements in programming and the design criteria can be done to justify any repetitive design solutions.

The POE can also be used to make extensive research on the effects of buildings on their occupants. It can also be used to test the application of new concepts to justify the actions and costs involved.

3 phases of POE

- Planning
- Conducting
- Applying

The first phase is planning. It involves establishing the schedules, costs and manpower needs and data collection procedures.

The second phase is conducting, which involves field data collection.

The third phase is applying, which means reporting findings, making recommendations and reviewing outcomes.

Benefits and uses of POE

Once an evaluation is completed, recommendations can be analyzed by the client and adjustments can be done to correct the problems. Through this process, lessons can be learned and improvements applied to future projects.



THE ING BANK Headquarters in Amsterdam, Netherlands is a world-renowned green building. Completed in 1987, it enjoys high occupants' satisfaction rating resulting in very significant high employee productivity. It features extensive use of daylight, high-energy efficiency and architectural innovations such as curvilinear form, local materials, plants, artwork and flowing water incorporated into the building in a highly integrated fashion.

occupancy evaluation is its positive influence on the design of appropriate environments for human beings through improvements in programming and planning.

Post occupancy evaluation is a type of product research that helps architects and designers develop a better design to support the changing requirements of people and organizations.

Post occupancy evaluation can help strike a balance between facilities and organizations, including the people and the activities they support.

(For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com)

Most important benefit

The most important benefit of a post oc-

Bonifacio Global City soon to sport a new logo

AN ABSTRACT FIGURE IN LIME green and deep aquamarine with a bold touch of orange is now the new logo of Bonifacio Global City. Representing a new master plan for the heart of the emerging business district, the new logo is the face of Bonifacio Global City's ambitious relaunch.

Following the acquisition of a controlling stake in Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., partners Ayala Land Inc. and Evergreen Holdings Inc. are giving a grand makeover to the rising district strategically located in Taguig.

From a circular road network that would give rise to a host of problems including traffic choke points and odd-shaped lots, the new City Center master plan will transform BGC into a premier business district that really works.

4 new elements

The plan introduces four new



to serve as focal points.

One of the earliest tangible benefits of the new City Center master plan is an innovative retail development which will be launched later this year. The development's centerpiece is a 40-meter-wide landscaped area that will be 400 meters in length and will be lined by stores and restaurants with the latest and most novel concepts. From fashion and beauty, health and wellness, home accessories and furnishings, sports lifestyle, anything is just a literal walk down the road.

Urban haven

The vision of the new business district is captured in the new Bonifacio Global City logo with the main visual element, a lime green circle representing the City Center's transformation into an urban haven. Its progressive na-

ture is captured by the overlapping lines that allude to modern contemporary art and at the same time express the movement and fluidity of a mixed-use site where the boundaries between work, leisure, and personal spaces will no longer be strictly defined.

The circle also represents completeness and convergence, qualities that will further define the self-sustaining business district. The square within the circle communicates a sense of structure and stability within this ever-changing urban landscape. The logo makes use of deep aquamarine to express the energy and vibrance with a contrast offered by bright colors for passion and creativity. This horizontal band evokes the new east-west axis centered on the retail promenade. In its entirety, the logo represents a city steeped in possibilities and teeming with diversity.

CrownAsia to launch P7.5-B projects in third quarter

CROWNASIA, THE COUNTRY'S biggest builder of master-planned urban housing, is investing P7.5 billion on new real estate developments in Metro Manila. Following up on the property firm's decade-long leadership in building homes and communities for middle-income families all over the country, CrownAsia will subsequently launch five major projects in the third quarter of 2006.

"As a pioneer master-planned community (MPC) developer in the Philippines, CrownAsia is committed to developing an upgraded line of residential communities," said CrownAsia president Jerry Navarrete. "Each community combines strategic location and well-planned land use, offering homeowners a range of opportunities within a single, self-contained and environmentally responsible community."

Corporate vision

Citing the property firm's corporate vision, Navarrete said CrownAsia offers homes and master-planned communities featuring designs of enduring excellence and value which in turn innovate the residential opportunities in Metro Manila.

Crown City, a 300-hectare mixed-use development (comprised of residential and commercial areas) valued at P3.5 billion will be launched in July. The 10-year master-planned enclave is envisioned to become the town center of Bacoor, Cavite which will feature an IT park, financial district and commercial center with a symphony of residential opportunities such as single-detached homes, walk-up and high-rise condos and townhomes.

The P1-billion Assumption Heights in Antipolo City to be launched on the same month is another mixed-use project inspired by American countryside architecture. To be unveiled in August is the P500-million Altadena in Pasig City, offering a limited number of townhomes to ensure exclusivity for its prime location accessible via Ortigas Avenue.

"CrownAsia has become a major player in condo marketing in as short as two years with Presidio by the Bay launched in May 2005 and Presidio New Manila launched in March 2006," Navarrete said.

Vertical communities

"Two new vertical communities will be unveiled following the success of the first and second condo development," Navarrete said.

The Crown SkyArts University Bldk, a P1-billion high-rise development to be launched in July will be located in Sampaloc,

Manila, right across University of Santo Tomas. The 27-story vertical home is ideal for students, doctors and faculty members of neighboring educational facilities.

By August, CrownAsia will launch the Crown Tower Greenbelt, a P1.5-billion condo project located in the heart of Legazpi Village, Makati. The 30-story rise is just a walk away from the educational facilities of the Asian Institute of Management and the commercial and shopping areas of Greenbelt.

The company has commissioned top property consultants Recio + Casas Architects; Cosculluela & Associates Architecture Firm; Palafox & Associates Architectural Urban Planning and Design Consultancy; and Santos, Caguiguan & Associates (SC&A) to lead the structural design and planning of the new projects.

CrownAsia is presently divided into three development categories: GenteSkylines, vertical self-contained communities to innovate the metro's residential skyline; SignatureHomes, a roster of stand-out enclaves reflecting the self-made success of its residents; ProudHomewards, a roster of defined communities which continue to flourish for more Filipino families.

13 ongoing developments

At present, the company has 13 ongoing developments valued at P12 billion in Metro Manila alone. Categorized under GenteSkylines are Presidio at Britton Bay in Sucat, Muntinlupa, and Presidio New Manila in Quezon City; under SignatureHomes are Valenza in Sta. Rosa, Laguna; Residenza and Pontecell in Bacoor, Cavite; and Mille Luce and Cotomwood in Antipolo City;

under ProudHomewards are Citta Italia in Imus, Cavite; Amici in Bacoor, Cavite; Arnalfi in Dasmarinas, Cavite; Fortezza in Cabuyao, Laguna; and Maria Alta and Woodberry in Antipolo City.

The lineup of eight completed CrownAsia communities in Metro Manila consists of Vivace in Imus, Cavite; La Mediterranea in Dasmarinas, Cavite; Madelaine Place and Classic Square in Bacoor, Cavite; Mia Vita in Antipolo City; Beacon Place in Las Piñas City; and La Brea and Grandwood in Quezon City.

CrownAsia recently earned a Gold Trusted Brand Award in the Philippine property market from the Reader's Digest 6th annual survey of brand performance," Navarrete concluded, "Validating our mission to deliver not merely property projects, but building markers of progress which improves the quality of life of homeowners and contribute to sustained socio-economic growth for Filipinos."

The Pinoy dream fulfilled at Canyon Ranch

OWNING A HOME IN AN EXCLUSIVE gated community has become a fundamental Pinoy aspiration. It is the Filipinized version of the American dream of a comfortable life in a white picket-fenced home.

With the country's encouraging economic upsurge, we find ourselves on the verge of the biggest real estate boom in history, and it looks like more and more Pinoyos will soon be able to live the new "Filipino" dream.

The postwar period has seen the Alabang area progress into one of the most coveted addresses for Pinoy families mainly because of its exclusive environment, sense of security, and accessibility. Today, a home in Alabang is synonymous with prestige, wealth and good taste.

Of course, while most people, expats included, are eager to live in the area, the discerning future homeowner, keen on giving more value to his hard work, has discovered the best kept secret only 10 minutes away: Canyon Ranch.

At half the price

Just one toll booth away from the Alabang exit (a mere 10-minute drive) is a most prestigious gated community that rises far above sea level with a unique rolling terrain that has been compared to the magnificent hills of California. This ranch-style development showcases magnificent homes with impressive split-level configurations, expansive balconies that offer an unparalleled view of the breathtaking natural surroundings, and a perpetually cool and breezy climate completely unique to its location. All of these at a price that won't even get you a lot in Alabang.

Concert King Martin Nievera, himself a resident of Alabang, has spoken highly of the incredible value he saw in Canyon Ranch. Starting as low as P2 million, buyers get a magnificent two-story California-style home with sun-drenched, free-flowing interiors and view decks that give commanding views of vast bodies of water and lush mountains, including the hills of Antipolo, Laguna de Bay, Mt. Banahaw and Mt. Makiling.

Ideal place

Canyon Ranch is an ideal place to raise a



CANYON Ranch is a most prestigious gated community just 10 minutes away from the Alabang exit.



LANAI

family or to enjoy that long-awaited retirement. Homes are fully Wi-Fi integrated and master-planned with a world-class commercial complex that blends sports and a multitude of entertainment facilities.

The Manila Jockey Club, a world-standard twin-oval horse racetrack with vast stabling facilities, jockey's quarters and a state-of-the-art turf club building, is also just a stone's throw away from the residences. Nearing completion are restaurants and bars, gaming and entertainment areas, an equestrian school and a riding academy.

Canyon Ranch is the first horizontal development of Century Properties, developer of such award-winning projects like Essensa East Forbes, Soho Central, and South of Market.

Says Jose E.B. Antonio, chair of Century Properties Group: "At the core of the Canyon Ranch master plan is an insistence on balance, a lively interplay between work and leisure, between retail spaces and lifestyle, and between private interest and the public good."

Secured investment

As with many overseas Pinoy workers currently investing in Philippine real estate, Martin Nievera (now based in Las Vegas) immediately seized the opportunity of purchasing a

piece of property in this community. And as time passes, the Concert King believes that it will be the kind of home that will not only meet the basic needs of his family but will house those precious moments that will last a lifetime.

He says that best of all, his investment is secure with a company like Century, the largest private real estate firm in the Philippines.

With a track record of over two decades of visionary real estate, Century Properties has been offering its clients the perfect mix of unbearable affordability and incomparable luxury in its continuous mission to make the Pinoy's dream come to life.

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SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2006

PROPERTY

B2-3

Escaping urban life without leaving the city



THE POND is a big hit among the kids who enjoy feeding the fishes.

FOR ITS HEALING POWER, WATER HAS always been regarded as the "elixir of life"—from the bathhouses in Rome to the holy spring of Zamzam in Mecca, and now up to the Mayfield Park Residences in Pasig City.

It is the soothing sound of water that makes both the modern-day and the ancient Zen practice of meditation and relaxation effective against the stress of urban living.

Such is particularly so in Mayfield Park Residences, an in-city condominium complex whose Zen environment makes a flowing body of water the centerpiece of this sophisticated residential enclave.

Mayfield's pond

Complementing the clubhouse, the pond is cocooned by garden greens and natural stones, making it a virtual rejuvenating nook made more scenic by a suspended wooden bridge. The pond is serenely beautiful during the day and enchanting on clear nights when the koi swim under the reflection of the

"The pond was a welcome surprise when I was contemplating on buying a unit here," says resident Belinda Santos, a young highly successful finance executive who works in a very competitive environment.

"What initially attracted me was the property's attractive price for a 2-bedroom condo and accessibility to my office. Then I saw the overall design concept and the pond by the clubhouse... it was the perfect 'icing-on-the-cake' so to speak and I was convinced, I simply had to have a unit here," she says.

A Zen enthusiast, Belinda believes in the healing power of water. "I read it in a book that ponds in Japanese gardens were highly



MAYFIELD resident Belinda Santos relaxes near the pond by the clubhouse.

Belinda is just so happy that it is something she can look forward to every day. "The hum of the flowing water never fails to give off a calming effect on me. It's best when I'm out here reading a favorite novel, reviewing balance sheets or just sipping coffee to start a lazy weekend right," she confesses, citing it as her perfect antidote to a stressful day at work, and the ideal complement to her very modern condo unit nearby.

Refuge in the city

Ironically, this haven is in the middle of the city, just a few minutes away from Ortigas Center, Libis Commercial Complex and Araneta Center in Cubao.

Located beside Makro in Cainta, Mayfield Park Residences is near to everything a resident needs and probably offers the last refuge from city life without having to leave the city.

For more info visit www.dmchomes.com or call 888-3333.

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Sentricon participates in construction convention

THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED CONEX 2006 was a construction convention that gathered together dozens of diverse companies and hundreds of their product lines under one roof. The four-day exhibit was organized by the United Architects of the Philippines and was held at the World Trade Center in Pasay City from last April.

The event coincided with the organization's 32nd anniversary and provided a high-profile venue for the construction and real estate industry to launch new products and services. Among the exhibitors is Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System, whose authorized operators were on hand to give away advertising and information materials and entice visitors to consider their renowned termite eradication system.

Rotating roster

The rotating roster of Sentricon representatives gave the different operators the chance to make it, and their services, known to convention guests. One such day was allotted, for instance, to Entom Pest Control, Biotech, Topbest Pest Services and Cabuyao Pest Control Services.

Jose Aragon Pabale, general manager of Cabuyao Pest Control Services, explained that as an authorized operator for Sentricon, his job was to enlighten interested parties with information. "Any structure can be infiltrated by termites," Pabale said. "Sentricon is at the UAP's exhibit for exposure. I was invited to join and it's been rewarding because people from different locations in the country inquire about the product, termites and the problems they en-

countered with regard to termite infestations."

He added that Conex was an opportunity to make contact with people from the industry, as well as casual visitors who have yet to hear about their Sentricon and how termites can be effectively eliminated. "We can see the potential of the business to expand. There were many people who were interested in trying out Sentricon. I've been telling them that they are assured of 100 percent elimination of termites in their homes. The Conex convention allowed us to talk to people about our exhibit on termite control."

Promoting Sentricon

Conex 2006 was also a unique convention for Sentricon, as there was teamwork involved with the other pest control companies during the special occasion.

Says Pabale: "The different authorized operators were there to entertain queries from visitors and possibly potential clients. There are three of us for one day and there will be different operators the day after. We help each other and are united in promoting Sentricon and distributing materials because we believe in its effectiveness because we have tried it and have undergone extensive training to ensure our success. Aside from termites, other pest management issues are sought by guests of the convention." For more information about Sentricon, interested parties can call them at 882-1767, 882-4513 and 840-3874.

The other participating Sentricon authorized operators were Pest Away Corp., Vira Pest, Pestcon Pest Management, Renskil

Philippines, Metropolitan Pest Control, Chemtron Enterprises, NokaOi International, Mr. Bug master and Landnet.

Termite attacks need not be a recurring problem. Protect your homes and establishments once and for all with the Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System, the winner of the 2000 US Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Award. Sentricon is safe and have undergone extensive studies and trials to ensure effectiveness. For further information on this trusted pest extermination product, please visit www.sentricon.com.

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Joint ventures for realty projects

THE URBAN INSTITUTE OF REAL ESTATE WILL CONDUCT A SEMINAR on Joint Venture and Syndication for Real Estate Projects on July 3, from 1:30 to 6 p.m. at the Maximo Function Room, Max's Restaurant, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City.

Topics to be taken up include Concepts and Types of Joint Venture and Project Syndication; Reasons for Joint Ventures; Obligations of Landowner; Undertakings of the Developer; Role of the Syndicator; Financier's Role; Packaging a JV Proposal; Syndication Agreement; Sharing Schemes; Safety Nets for Developers; Safeguards for Landowner; Important provisions in a JV Agreement; and Participation Mortgages.

Lecturer would be Enrico Cruz, who is a civil engineer and has more than three decades of working experience in engineering, construction, real estate development and education. For inquiries, call Urban at 681-0928.

Advanced tools . . .

From page B2-4

been very essential

"These softwares have successfully replaced traditional paper and pens for creating design and construction drawings. Today, these softwares allow our firm to simulate reality, giving us the ability to test and visualize in a digital environment," Calma says.

This results in new efficiencies, reduced errors and collaboration across teams and because of these, Calma says they are able to bring their most innovative ideas

to their clients.

"Take for example the building designs we have proposed for the complex. Because of softwares like Autodesk Revit Building, our team is able to come up with complex designs that would have otherwise taken us days or weeks if we were still using other technologies," Calma says.

Much more, through the three-dimensional designs (using the Autodesk Inventor), Calma says the team is able to present virtual models that accurately predict a design's real-world performance, optimize energy consumption, and minimize waste in the manufacturing lifecycle.

"As a result, we also increased client satisfaction since we have improved the way we communicate with them. Through these softwares they can now easily visualize our design proposals. I believe having these technologies at our disposal enable us to compete more effectively," he says.



THE BRIDGE that Calma's team drew up will link the complex to the rest of the city.

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PROPERTY

Advanced tools to match imaginations of architects, designers

By Charles E. Buban

WHEN THE MANAGEMENT of the Cultural Center of the Philippines recently held a public competition to come up with a design that will transform this government property into a symbol of Philippine heritage and arts as well as a thriving commercial hub, Lor Calma Design Associates and its partner IP Santos and Associates came up with a very interesting concept.

"The competition was a welcome challenge for us considering CCP's historical and cultural significance. It also gave us a chance to communicate our idea on how to transform this 57.8-hectare complex into something

that we could feel proud of," says LCDA architect and interior designer Eduardo Calma.

But before drawing up the entry, Calma's team identified two things that must be addressed in their upcoming design: the need to link the complex to the rest of the city and pedestrians coming from the eastern side of Roxas Boulevard and the absence of a dominant structure that would unify all the other structures within the complex.

Gateway to the complex

"For the first challenge, we needed a bridge that can serve as a gateway to the complex. This bridge will lead to a sculptured garden of varying ground

levels and to the proposed visitor's information center," Calma says.

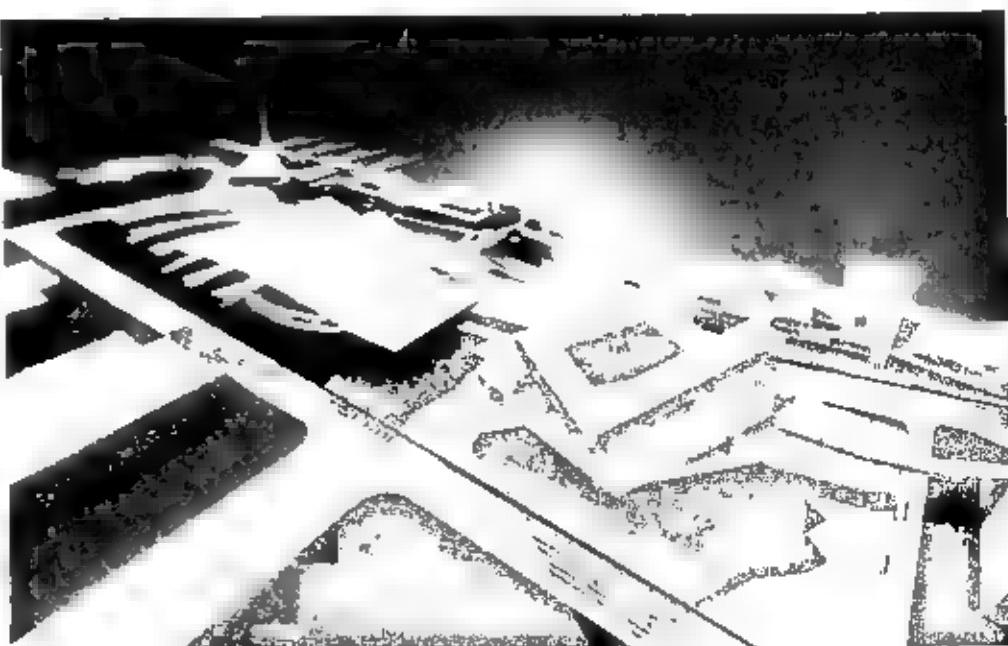
From here Calma's team proposed several elevated pedestrian bridges and multilevel ramps leading to other landmarks like the Arust's Center, Performing Arts Center and a 60-meter lighthouse at the western tip of the promenade.

"The result will be an interconnected, highly walkable complex ground that opens up a lot of spaces for holding exhibits and other cultural presentations," Calma explains.

Essential

In preparing the design entry, Calma says Autodesk softwares have

ADVANCED 3D-4



COMPLEX structures that filled the proposed design.



Being a mover and a shaker can be a very draining experience, especially in the frenetic pace of Makati. Getting boxed in by all the big decisions can take its toll on you, especially when you are unable to reward yourself for all the hard work that you put in. An entire day can leave you too drained and burnt out to even reap the rewards of your success.

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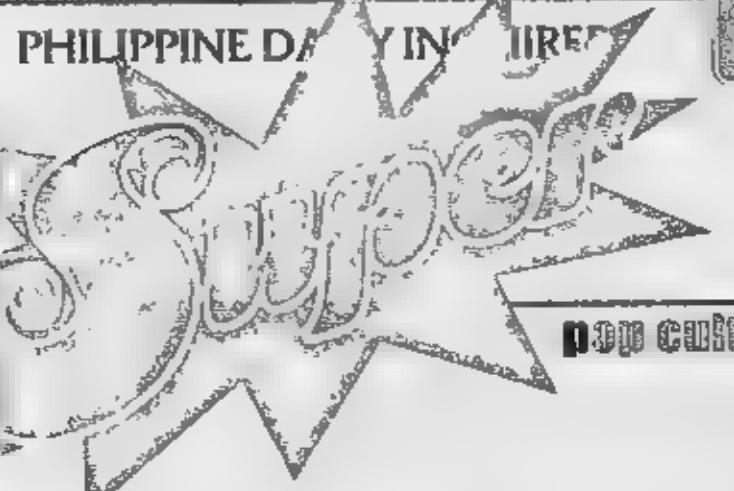
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Editor Pam Pastor
Creative Director Tim Yap



Super! goes gaga over the World Cup, and crazy at the 59th Cannes Film Festival



Underwear Fever

FOR A B-SPORTS CRAZY nation like ours (meaning Basketball, Billiards, Boxing, Ballroom Dancing, Badminton and Bowling), it's so refreshing indeed to know that like the rest of humanity, the whole country is now intently glued to their TV sets in the evenings and early mornings watching the 2006 FIFA World Cup telecast from Germany.

With action on the football pitch reaching a feverish high as the second round starts this week, establishments showing the games live have experienced a fiesta-like atmosphere as well as business booming since the extravaganza started. Places like Flamma, National Sports Grill, Absinth, Heckle and Jeckle, Handlebar, Mezze and many others have hordes of football fans (thank God minus the hooligans) rooting for their idols. So far, most of those we've seen are fans of perennial football powers Brazil, England, Italy, Argentina, Spain, France and host nation Germany. Men and women wearing football jerseys cheer and jeer as they eat their midnight snack while gulping down their favorite beer or sipping some wine.

While sports fans eagerly await this year's World Cup champion, the whole country won't mind feeling under the weather as it waits with bated breath for this year's Super Hot edition of the Bench Fever Underwear and Denim Show happening on Friday, June 30 at the Araneta Coliseum. Temperatures and curtains will rise at 7 p.m. Special guests at the disco inspired event will be '70s-'80s recording giants Sister Sledge and The Village People. Both groups have had several chart topping dance tracks and their mere presence elicited ooohs and aahs at the iconic Studio 54 in New York, the world's most famous and notorious disco. Tickets to this once every two years only show are getting rarer than the Philippine Eagle, so if you want to score some free tickets, start running to the nearest Bench store and join their ongoing promotions. The good news though is that you need not be in your undies to get the tickets. And don't forget your Earth, Wind and Fire outfit, Donna Summer lyrics and John Travolta moves. Mirror balls are welcome too. So all together now, We are family... In the Navy... He's the greatest dancer, YMCA.

Other Super! 24/7 events:

June 24, Saturday

Kwan at 6Underground, Pinupikan at 70s Bar, Urban Groove: R&B Night at Citrus Salaa Night at Rocco-Renzo Café; DJ Martin Pulgar at Embassy Club; Campustion Night at Mag net Café, Pump Saturdays at Jill's, DJ Badboy Jeff at Temple Soundgood at Embassy Cuisine; DJ Bandal Varia at Government, DJs Bliss & Shorty at Prince of Jaipur; Massive Saturdays at Bed, Joint band at Off the Grill, Classified at Dush, Plantstunes at Merk's, Nina at the Music Museum

June 25, Sunday

Palente's Eye art exhibit at UP Jorge B. Vargas Museum, Champagne Lunch at



Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenca-Dario

Paseo Uno (Mandarin Oriental); Champagne Brunch at Spiral (Hotel Phil. Plaza); Acoustic Night at Phi Bar, Cascades at the Manila Hotel

June 26, Monday

Sidi: Bossa Night at Stonehouse; Salsa Night w/ Salsa Filipinas at Mezze; Ethan band at Temple; I Don't Like Mondays w/ DJ Ro at Gweilos Makati; Silk & Steel at Merk's; Teresa Avila at The Tivoli; Folhes de Mwah at Club Mwah

June 27, Tuesday

Cuisine Royale with House DJ Manolet Dario at Embassy Cuisine; Sitti at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt; Kickback Tuesdays at Manila DJ Club; Juicy Nythife at Citrus; Guarana at Café Havana Greenbelt; Acoustic Night at Temple; Engelbert Humperdinck at Araneta Coliseum

June 28, Wednesday

Retro DJ Boyet Almazan at Struman's; DJ Steve Mills at Absinth; DJ Papi Santos at Mezze; DJs Karl Ty & Cao Ocampo at Embassy Cuisine; Funkysouljah at Manila DJ Club; Birthday Bash at Citrus; DJs Mars Miranda & Johnnyverse at Embassy Club; DJ Joffy Cruz at Gweilos Makati; DJ Crash at Temple; DJ Brit at Government; Double Happiness at Prince of Jaipur; Jazz Night at Magnet Café; Julia Duncan at Merk's

June 29, Thursday

Coup with House DJ Manolet Dario at Flamma, Reggae Night at 6Underground; BBC's SweetSuiteSoul w/ DJ Mike Constantino at Sake Lab; GottaHaveHouse! With DJs Mark Jones and Wendell Garcia at Capone's; SPIT at Magnet Café; G Lounge at Mezze; Latina Thursday at Prince of Jaipur; Fluxx: Whatever Thursdays at Manila DJ Club; Supahstar DJ Thursdays at Bed; DJ Badboy Jeff at Temple, Nuvo Soul with Elhan Hababeb at Nuvo

June 30, Friday

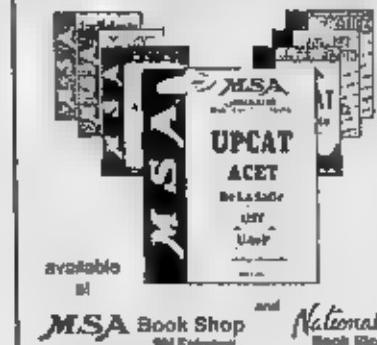
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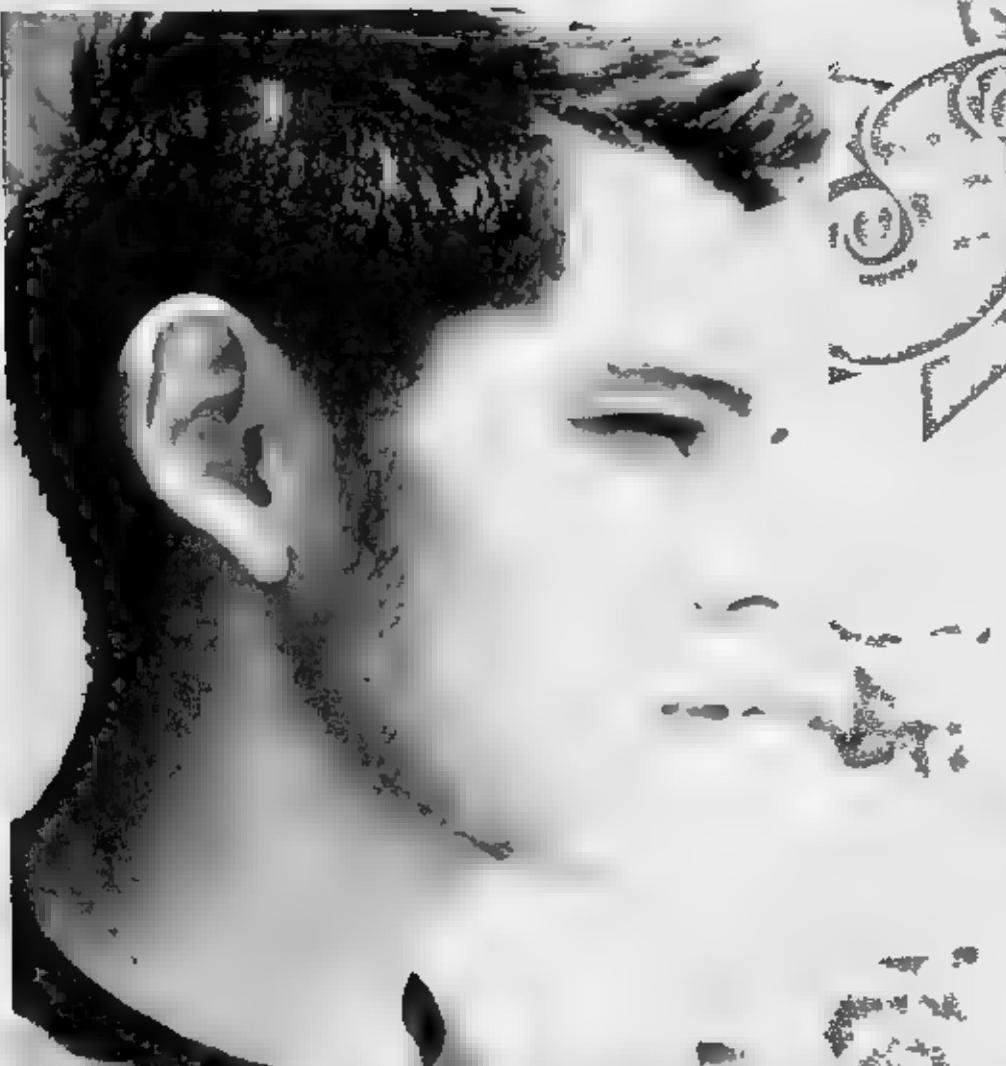
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Super! goes Gaga over the World Cup, and crazy at the 59th Cannes Film Festival

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The country's first integrated mobile payments platform G-Cash adds mobile donations tools via SMS to consumer transactions such as G-Cash Bills (BBL, Hayab, etc), bill payment, G-Cash2Go for prepaid phone, internet, and online gaming recharging, and G-Cash Pay2Panida for money transfer and remittance. Now, registered G-Cash users can make mobile donations via a selection of institutions, including prominent government agencies, religious organizations, and non-profit foundations. To give contributions to your selected beneficiary, simply text "DONATE <space> AMT <space> MPIN <space> INSTITUTION CODE" to 2882.

To further support these organizations in collecting more funds for their projects, G-Xchange Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Globe handling G-Cash, will be contributing P1.00 for each donation made using G-Cash to the top three agencies who will receive the highest number of ten donations via G-Cash from June to December this year.

G-Cash has previously implemented mobile fund drive for disaster relief and emergency assistance organized by international organizations such as the Red Cross and Unicef, and it is anticipated that this new service will generate similarly generous contributions from the public.

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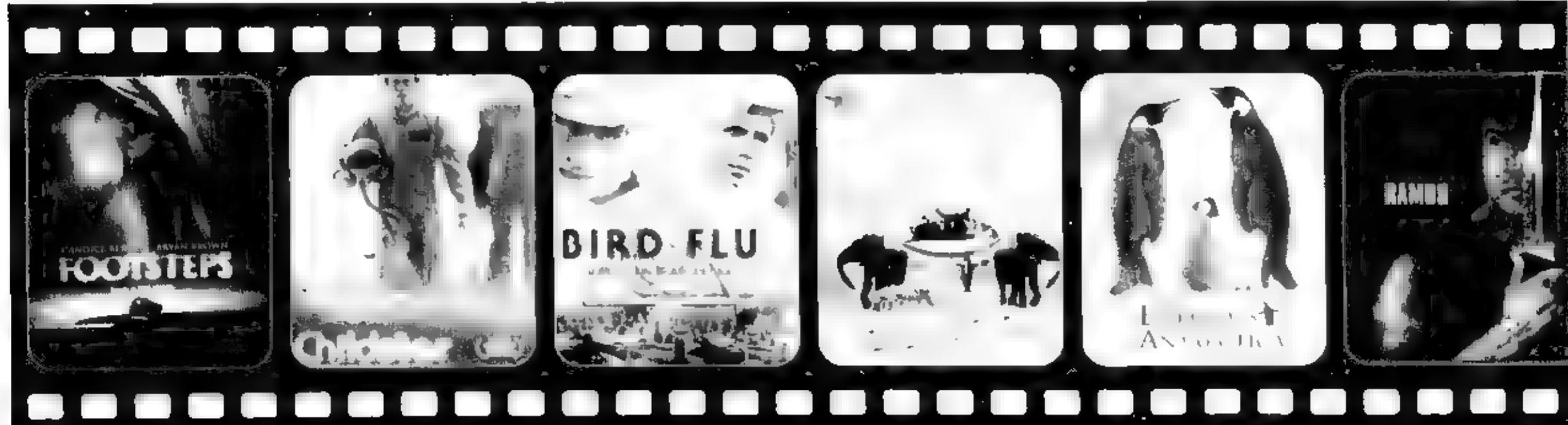
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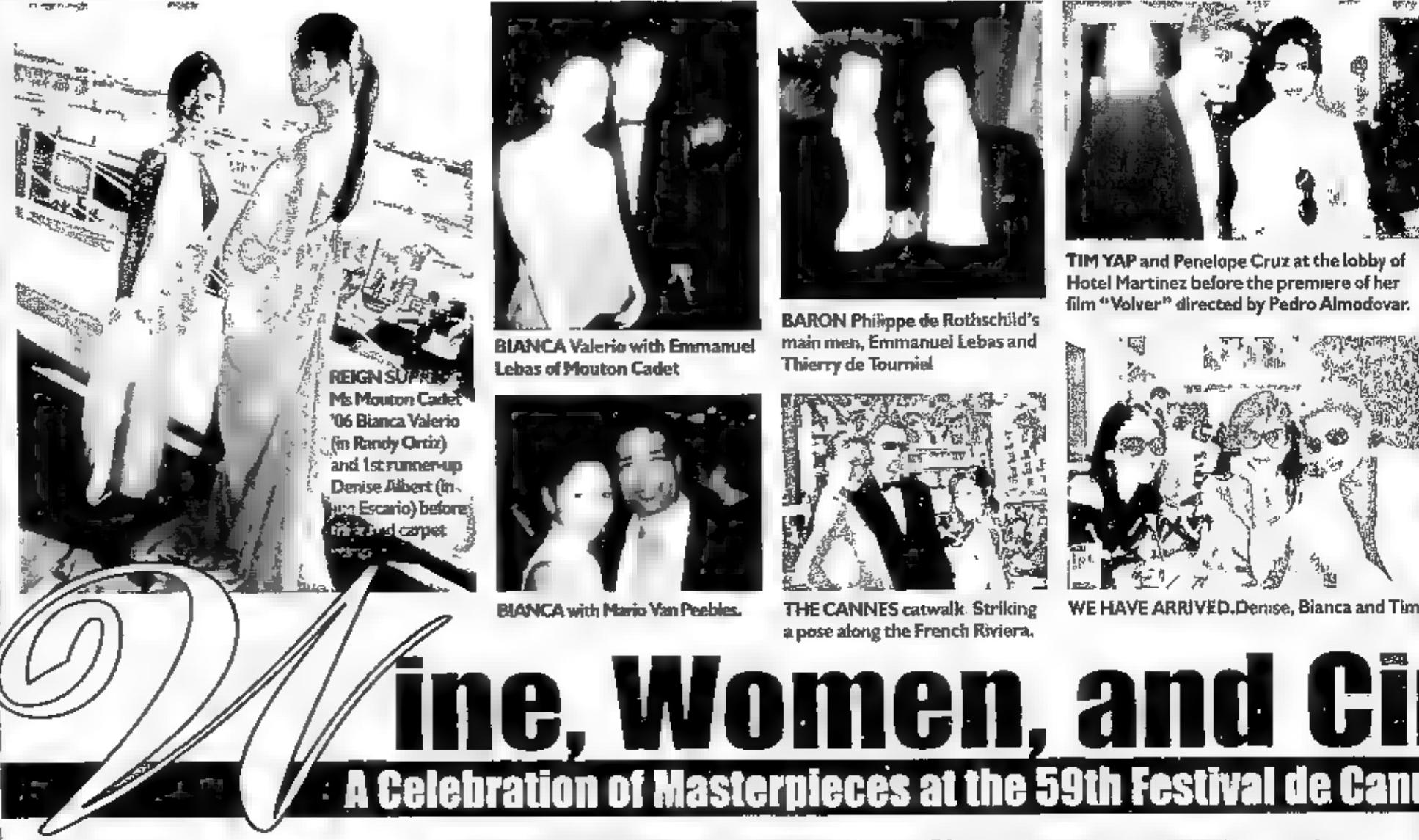
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A beauty queen's Cannes checklist



TIM YAP and Penelope Cruz at the lobby of Hotel Martinez before the premiere of her film "Volver" directed by Pedro Almodovar.



WE HAVE ARRIVED. Denise, Bianca and Tim.

Vine, Women, and Cine

A Celebration of Masterpieces at the 59th Festival de Cannes

By Denise Albert,
First Runner-Up Miss Mouton Cadet 2006

*Fill ev'ry glass, for wine inspires us,
And fires us
With courage, love and joy.
Women and wine should life employ.
Is there ought else on earth desirous?*
John Gay 1685-1732
The Beggar's Opera (1728),
act II, sc. i, air 19

EVERY SPRING, CHIC Cannes at the French Riviera becomes a veritable melting pot for a massive smorgasbord of films from every corner of the globe. This year's Festival de Cannes was well-attended by the brightest stars in the international showbiz constellation, with the likes of Tom Hanks, Penelope Cruz, Beyoncé Knowles, and Monica Bellucci gracing the Red Steps of the Grand Théâtre Lumière—the main theater showcasing films from the Official Selection of this year's festival.

But while this grand international extravaganza would not be complete without the stars, our exhilaratingly luxurious experience at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival consisted of a distinct recipe that was not entirely hinged on star spotting: it was the beautiful scenery, glamorous people, the chic and expensive boutiques, and more importantly, the winning and dining alongside the main attraction: the films. To this Filipino, having an exhaustive wining and dining experience coupled with cinema at Cannes was definitely a new and refreshing encounter. On so many levels there are many reasons why the wining and dining are integral parts of the Cannes Film Festival and France itself.

Mono-sensory experience

Like a glass of premium French wine, such as Baron Philippe de Rothschild's Mouton Cadet, a cinematic masterpiece is more than just a mono-sensory experience. Savoring it involves more than just taking it through one of your senses. The senses of sight, smell, and taste are key in the pleasurable enjoyment of wine. When you observe a work of art on the silver screen, you listen as you see the story unfold before you on the screen. You are taken for a ride as you unveil layer after layer in the experience. The glittering black-tie, red carpet premiere we attended was of the film "Indigenes" (Days of Glory) by Paris-based Algerian film master, Rachid Bouchareb. A gripping and raw portrayal of the North Africans who fought for France during World War II, the movie was an inspiring saga that forced us viewers to explore our beliefs about heroism. It actually led me to question whether, if in the same position, I would hold to my beliefs in patriotism and nationalism, and die for them even when



TEAM PHILIPPINES on the Cannes Film Festival red carpet.



PINK PRETTY. Anne Cusson of Mouton Cadet

the bleakest of situations would determine there would be no way I would win. The multitude of layers in the film again revealed each as the movie spurred on and took me through every frightening, heart-breaking, and tragic

Hundreds of films

One thing that surprised me at the Cannes Film Fest was how many films were being featured. Literally, there were hundreds of films, playing at public theaters all the way to the Grand Théâtre Lumière. French films, Japanese films, Portuguese films, Chinese films, Spanish films, American films, Taiwanese films... the list is endless. And within each of these entries from every conceivable nation, there are genres of every kind: cinematic epics, tragedies, action-packed films, adventure flicks, dark comedies, glossy mainstream features (like Beyoncé Knowles stunner "Dreamgirls"), horror films (like Asian import "The Eye" which has already been seen in the Philippines)—even romantic comedies like "Love Wrecked" with pop culture icon Amanda Bynes and slapstick comedies like "Van Wilder 2: The Rise of the Taji." For one to attend the full twelve-day run of the Festival de Cannes means having a dizzying array of movies to choose from, anything to suit your mood and taste. Again, this is coincidentally just like choosing your wine. Chardonnay, Cabernet, Pinot Noir, white, red, bubbly, dry, sweet, bitter... you have the luxury of choice in selecting what to take to heart (and belly).

Plain-faced, it is easy to determine why wine and cinema are key elements in Cannes. After

watching the latest from the Official Selection, the restaurants are packed with glamorous French men and women enjoying their meals. And the French are very fond of long, leisurely meals that can go on for hours. From aperitif to dessert, the formal mode of dining in France dictates a different partner wine for every course. Our days and nights in Cannes largely consisted of pleasurable meals in expensive French restaurants where it was not uncommon to have a three or four-hour meal with exquisite gastronomic delights. In fact I like to joke that barely an hour or two after being giddy and light-headed from lunch, you are off to dinner for another round of dining and wining—and since being tipsy in public is a tremendous faux pas in France it is imperative to learn to control your alcohol intake.

So in a nutshell, our wondrous trip to Cannes was a thrilling experience. There was the women (thus petite writer included), the boudoir upon bottles of fine French wine, and of course the plethora of films. It is probably safe to say that wine and cinema can, in their own right, both be considered works of art. Winemakers and filmmakers create inspiring masterpieces from the world around them that inspire them in turn, their prized creations undergoing processes that will only answer to the command of time to achieve maturation. Rush these processes or short-cut them and you end up with lousy yields. And just like works of art, wine and cinema, to borrow words from John Gay's "The Beggar's Opera," both have the ability to "inspire us, and fire us, with courage, love and joy."

So very eloquently put. I'll drink to that.



A healthy queen's Cannes checklist

**By Denise Albert,
First Runner-Up Miss Mouton Cadet 2006**

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BIANCA Valerio with Emmanuel Lebas of Mouton Cadet



ISSUE 11.12.2011



THE CANNES catwalk. Striking a pose along the French Riviera



WE HAVE ARRIVED. Denise, Bianca and Tiota

Cine, Women, and Cinema

Celebration of Masterpieces at the 59th Festival de Cannes



TEAM PHILIPPINES on the Cannes Film Festival red carpet



THE BARON'S SON



PINK PRETTY. Anne
Cusson of Mouton
Sister

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Plain-faced, it is easy to determine why wine and cinema are key elements in Cannes. After

watching the latest from the Official Selection, the restaurants are packed with glamorous French men and women enjoying their meals. And the French are very fond of long, leisurely meals that can go on for hours. From aperitif to dessert, the formal mode of dining in France dictates a different partner-wine for every course. Our days and nights in Cannes largely consisted of pleasurable meals in expensive French restaurants where it was not uncommon to have a three or four hour meal with exquisite gastronomic delights. In fact I like to joke that barely an hour or two after being giddy and light headed from lunch, you are off to dinner for another round of dining and wining—and since being tipsy in public is a tremendous faux pas in France it is imperative to learn to control your alcohol intake.

So in a nutshell, our wondrous trip to Cannes was a thrilling experience. There was the women (this petite writer included), the bottles upon bottles of fine French wine, and of course the plethora of films. It is probably safe to say that wine and cinema can, in their own right, both be considered works of art. Winemakers and filmmakers create inspiring masterpieces from the world around them that inspires them in turn, their prized creations undergoing processes that will only answer to the command of time to achieve maturation. Rush these processes or short-cut them and you end up with lousy yields. And just like works of art, wine and cinema, to borrow words from John Gay's "The Beggar's Opera," both have the ability to "inspire us, and fire us, with courage."

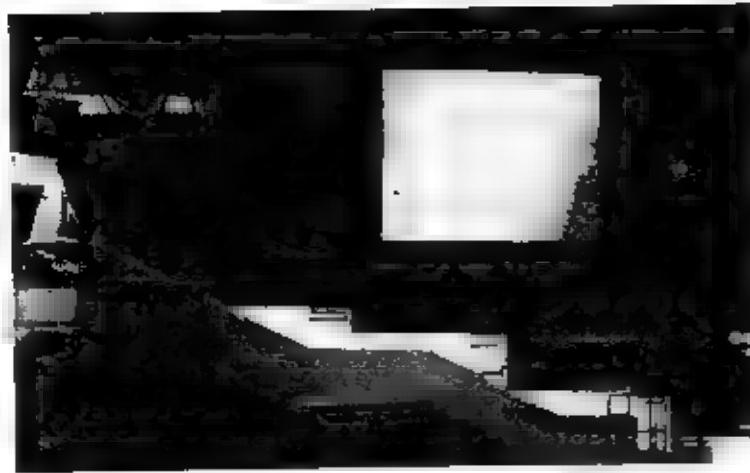
So very eloquently put I'll drink to that



There was the women (this petite writer included),
the bottles open bottles of fine French wine, and of
course the platters of ham.

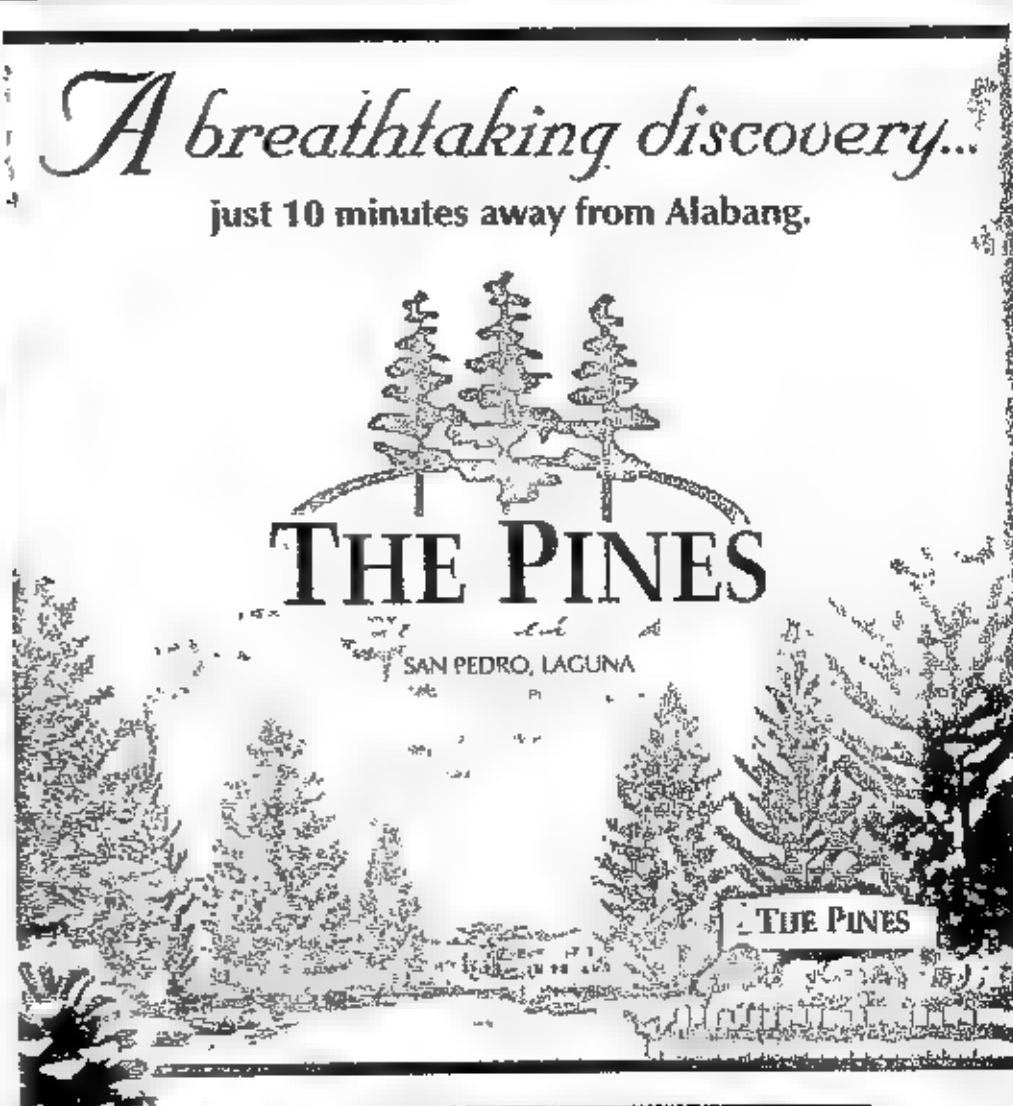


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**KALA and
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KALA: Manila sound is back in the groove

THE LOCAL MUSIC SCENE is in full bloom, with various Pinoy artists producing world-class hits. Local music is now penetrating the mainstream. In the center of this OPM Golden Era comes a resurgence of a sound that is distinctively Pinoy—Manila Sound.

Mania Sound is a genre that was popularized by the Hotdogs in the 70's with the famed hit "Mania." Today a fresh new band named Kala is reviving and redefining this genre.

Kala is behind the new hit song "Jeepney," which is currently



number one on the charts. Its music video features actress Snooky Serna.

"Manila Sound is the sound track of our everyday life in Manila," said Brian who has written and co-written a number of tracks for Kala's debut album, "Manila High."

The album is distributed nationwide by Sony BMG Music Entertainment Philippines Inc.

Rock for a cause

Kata has been performing at various venues in support of Rock Ed Philippines, which promotes nation-building through music. They released an EP last year entitled RockEdition. For the Benefit of the Filipino Youth to promote the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals and support the Global Call to Action Against Poverty. "Music is the purest language that we can use to reach out to individuals and unite them to make a difference in themselves. We



Rene Garcia, of the Hotdogs, noticed Kaja's sound as 'carrying the funky groove of the old 70s.'

Brian noted that it was Garcia who inspired them to classify their sound.

Influences

"Pinaghalo-halong influences ng mga myembro ang tunog ng Kaja. Manila Sound is something we can all be proud of. It gives OPM pride and personality."

Kala's second single entitled "Manila High" will be launched this July. The music video is a continuation of their debut video for Jeepney.

Other members of Kala are William Gaba don (bass), and Raymond Dayio (drums). They took the name Kala from kalabasa—the prime content of a cake-making college project they later called "Kala Cake Project."

More Excuses."
Aside from their advocacy, they

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OUT THE
WINDOW

Tals Diaz

and the
hopes of the
rare Piney
Football fan
watching
the World
Cup

THAT LINE FROM THE FILM "American Beauty" just comes to mind—"sometimes there's so much beauty in the world I feel like I can't take it, like my heart's going to cave in." And that is the closest thing that can describe what I feel every four years, when the world gets together to celebrate "the beautiful game." Ah ... the World Cup! Life is just too sweet, and everyday until

July 9 will be a beautiful day. Such havoc this beautiful game has wreaked on my system though that everyday, I pretty much resemble a character in the "Night of the Living Dead." It requires superhuman effort to live a normal life when you watch the live games everyday at the witching hour, soused with a lot of San Mig Light, of course, catch a couple of hours of shuteye before waking up and heading to a full day of work, energized on

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Maxim-UMI EXPOSURE for Joey Head



From page D1

ly by adrenaline and loads of coffee. I haven't slept or eaten much since the kickoff last June 9, and I'm afraid that my eyebags have permanently taken root in my face. This morning, I actually forgot to brush my hair, much to the amusement of my work mates, who casually pointed out that my *buhog-hag* hair could double as steel wool. When I attempt to explain my zombie-in-a-deserted-island look to people by saying, "it's the world cup!" more often than not, I'm greeted with blank stares and bemused looks. Tough crowd! Such is the fate of being a football fan in the Philippines; it's akin to talking to Pinoys about cricket or bobsledding or rugby. I may as well be speaking in an ancient Assyrian tongue in our basketball-crazy culture.

So it can get to be a bit frustrating. I'm not talking about my internal clock gone haywire—I can handle the sleepless nights for a month; for me that "pain" is part of the pleasure. The frustrations run much deeper. For one, it's painful on the pocket. Because football is not popular in the Philippines, it's not shown live on regular TV or cable. If you want to watch it at home, you have to pay to have it hooked up. Only a handful of bars in the city show the games live. Most of these bars are either watering holes of expats, or upscale bars that charge a mint for beer. Some of these establishments even ask for a cover charge, in order to compensate for the hefty amount they had to pay Solar Sports in order to have the games shown live in their establishment.

The good thing that comes out of this set up is that you get to hang out with other football-crazy fans from all over the world, Pinoys and expats alike, whose collective excitement charge the atmosphere with this electricity that makes watching the games even more pleasurable. Plus you won't get a furrowed brow when you talk about Argentina's demolition of Serbia-Montenegro the week before. In my experience watching the Brazil-Australia game last weekend at National Sports Grill, it was just incred-

ible to see Pinoys, Aussies, Koreans, Brazilians and Japanese fans in one venue, mesmerized by the game.

This ball...

I guess the most frustrating thing about being a big football fan in the Pinas is getting kicked in the gut with comments like this. "Jeez, what's all the fuss about, it's a bunch of people kicking around a ball for God's sake." Just today, a good friend living in Chicago e-mailed me complaining about the similar absence of football fever in the US. "It's crazy how the Americans have NOT a single ounce of World Cup fever," she writes, "the news tries so hard to make the US team look good to get people interested—but it's not working. My American manager has a sign outside his office—"it's just friggin' soccer." Absolute blasphemy!"

The truth is that, yes, the game is pretty much that simple—it's a bunch of people kicking around a ball towards a goal. Yet it's that very simplicity that is so profound. This simple thing—this ball, can bring the world together. To paraphrase the FIFA commercial, "it drastically changes the world... it closes the schools, closes the shops, closes the city... stops a war. This simple ball gives people everywhere something to hope for, gives countries respect where respect is in short supply. And achieves more than the politicians ever could." Imagine that, civil war in the ravaged African country, the Ivory Coast, stopped after three years, and its president declared a truce because they qualified for the World Cup for the first time? How wonderful it is that the world talked about Ghana, when they won against the Czech Republic? Once every four years indeed, a football does the impossible, it can overturn powers, glorify poor nations, and celebrate cultural differences, all because of a shared passion and love of the game.

The International Fan

Another question lobbed to me: "but the Philippines is not playing in the World Cup, so why are you watching?" This isn't an issue, say in Thailand and Malaysia, two countries who don't have teams

competing in the World Cup. People are glued to their TV sets watching the games. Bangladesh, another country that didn't qualify for the 1998 World Cup, was cut off due to many people watching.

There is such a thrill in being a football fan. Even if your country doesn't play in the World Cup, or is delusional about it and sharing in the hope of the people living in this country. Just to see the Anglo fans stop the game to a go, time and again about the world, well I bet about—even if you've known that somewhere people who are freaking out, and that's more than you think.

Football in Iloilo

So once again, I ask, is football popular in the Philippines?

The mystery is certainly solved. It is a ball and an open field, and you can build a court, and you can play it. All you need is to be a fan and to have this enthusiasm to score a goal.

I've often wondered in the Philippines about the aspects of our culture that are unique. In football, you can unite, every player works for the sake of the community. A lot of patience, sometimes forever before a goal is scored, when there is a draw, from an instant gratification, there's the beauty in



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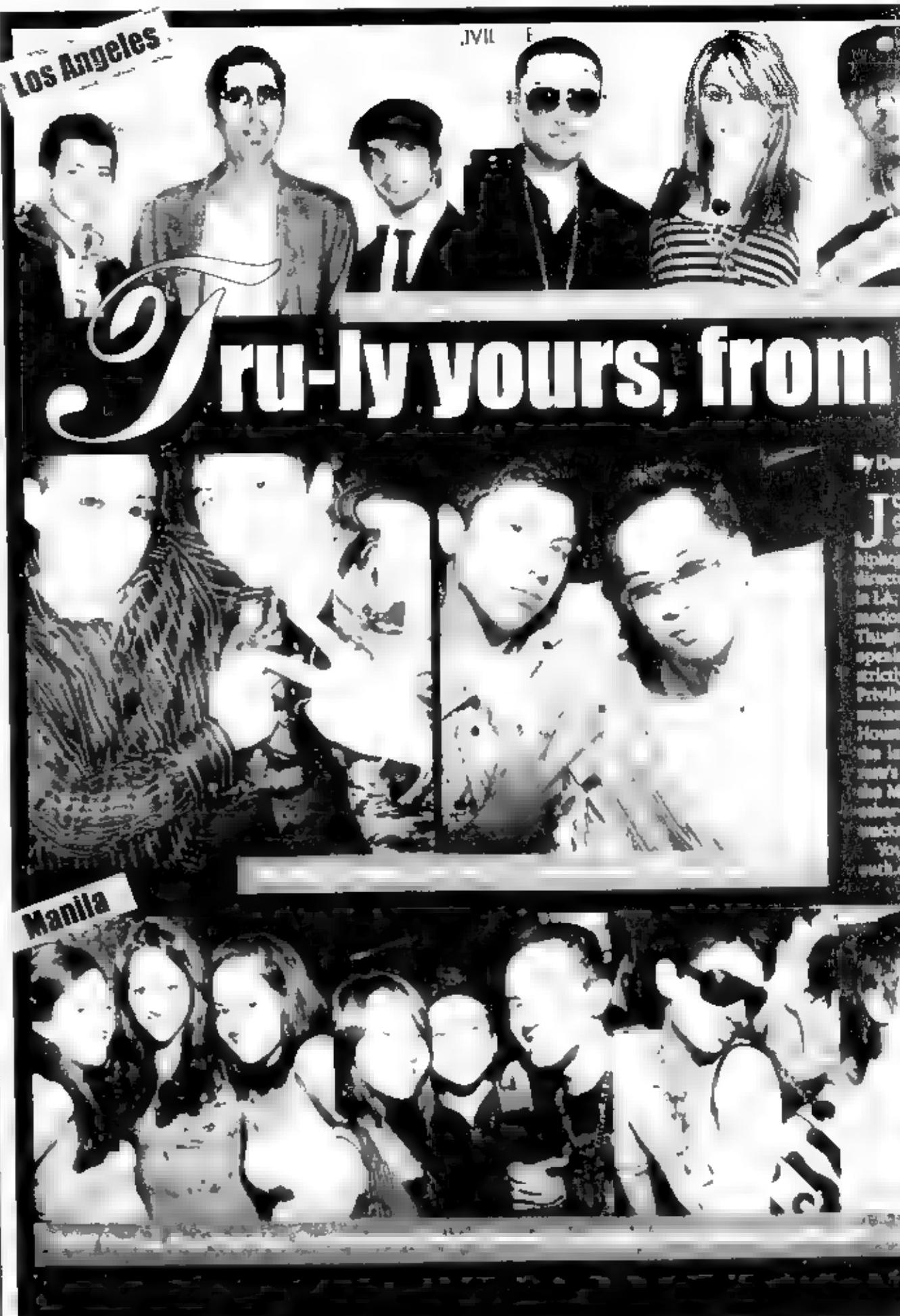
Are you afraid of being scarred for life?

By Dr. Ma. Carmen Nievera
Pediatric Infectious Disease Consultant
Asian Hospital and Medical Center

Few viral infections are more feared than the dreaded Chickenpox. Older people have a tale or two about how this illness has literally scarred them for life. The Varicella-zoster virus actually causes two diseases, Varicella (Chickenpox) and Zoster (Shingles). Chickenpox, the primary infection, usually occurs in childhood and is quite distinctive because of itchy skin rashes which are vesicular or blister-like lesions on the face, scalp, or trunk, though these can spread over the entire body. These lesions are usually 1-4 mm in diameter, superficial and delicate and contain clear fluid on a reddish base. Besides having between 250-500 itchy blisters of different stages (from reddish raised lesions to blisters forming to crusting) on the body, one can have mild fever, dehydration, headache and tiredness, lasting about 5-10 days. The virus then "hides" in the nerve ganglia during acute infection. Thereafter, Zoster or Shingles results when the virus reactivates and returns to infect the skin and produces a unilateral eruption of lesions following an area of nerve distribution (dermatome). Though not well understood, factors which are associated with recurrent disease include aging, decreased immunity, exposure to Varicella while in the mother's womb, and Chickenpox at an early age.

Varicella is highly contagious. Clinical infection will develop in 80-90% of non-immune persons exposed in a household. Secondary cases are usually more severe than the primary cases. The virus is spread by the airborne route and requires direct contact with an infected individual for transmission. It can spread from skin lesions as well as from the respiratory tract by coughing, sneezing, or talking. A person with chickenpox is contagious 1-2 days before the rash appears until all blisters have formed scabs. It will take from 10-21 days after contact with an infected person for Chickenpox to develop.

The clinical course of this illness in healthy children is generally mild. But, they may miss 5-6 days of school when ill. Adults and children with malignancies or immunosuppression may have more severe disease and have a higher rate of complications. These include secondary bacterial infections involving any organ of the body, dehydration, pneumonia, meningitis, encephalitis, hemorrhagic varicella, arthritis, and Reye's syndrome (especially in those on chronic aspirin intake). Complications are higher in persons older than 15 years and infants younger than 1 year of age. Adults account for only 5% of reported cases of Varicella, but account for approximately 35% of mortality. Many people are not aware that before the Varicella vaccine was introduced in the US, that country experienced 11,000 hospitalizations and 100 deaths from chickenpox every year—in other words, one child and one adult died each week from this disease.



CATCH THE FEVER!

In my humble attempt to spread the football fever among Pinoys, here are a few sites and YouTube links to check out:

- Official FIFA World Cup site: <http://www.fifaworldcup.yahoo.com>
- For match schedules: <http://www.soccerphile.com/soccerphile/wc2006/schedule/schedule.html>
- A few good videos:
 - A Simple Ball:
 -
 - [1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNcWwmFYqIM&mode=search&search_query=%20cup

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Cup either; yet they are everywhere in the streets, (I saw it myself). In trying without a team in the days of darkness during France, because the electricity power surge with too many games.

called an "international," isn't paying (or never up, there's nothing crazy appreciating the victories of the other village people-shrinking global village. We smile and cheer when Mexican defense and less draw! People ask me: "Is this what it's all about? Never left the country, you know. In Angola, there are people, even for but a moment enough reason to

why the heck is football pines?"

ily baffling. All you need is space. You don't need to don't even need to be tall, to think on your feet, ed sense of teamwork...in

the lack of football fever oaks of the negative as continually keeps us in a need to be a cohesive s hard in his position for goa. That goal requires times it takes a long time scored. Sometimes there are no winners in football is the furthest action sport. Then again, having goals that are so

One game, one world indeed. Now that is beautiful.

**Check out
the action,
and get high**

in football

Pinoys and the game

I am still hopeful though that Filipinos could learn to love football too. Perhaps all we need is to just pick up a ball, kick it around more and start playing it. Hell, that's how I contracted the fever in the first place, when I played for the girls' team back in Ateneo. The same college friends I've played with and watched the World Cup games in 1994, 1998 and 2002 are still the same feverish females e-mailing me every minute about the games—even if I haven't seen them in years and they're scattered across the globe living their own lives now. Now if the passion for this game can bring my old friends and I together again across the oceans, relish old memories and look forward to future World Cups, even just by the virtue of the Internet, just imagine how this sport unites so many people elsewhere in the planet?

One game, one world indeed. Now that is beautiful.

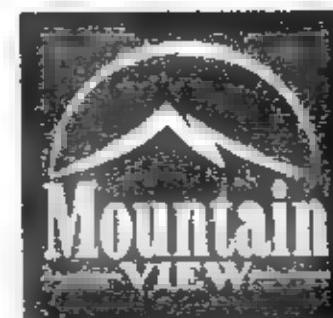


LA to Manila

HERRERA'S TRU YOUTH APPAREL WAS RECENTLY LAUNCHED IN Los Angeles during the birth of one of the most influential DJs in the industry—DJ E-man. He is currently the music director of Power 106, the most popular hip hop station. His talent has taken him far—he's been a performing DJ for artists like Tamia, Krazy Bone of Bone and Harmony, Baby Bash, and is also the only DJ of Mariah Carey during her concerts. The invitation-only party was held in the high-end club in Hollywood where guests include Jennifer Lopez, Frankie J., Baby Bash, Natalie, Marques, and a whole lot more. It didn't just stop there, which was continued in Manila during Jon Hernday party in Embassy Superclub. Guests in the launch were wowed when DJ Virman, another hip hop DJ in LA, spun and surprisingly played songs by Kylie, Kelly Clarkson and The Cardigans. To check out Tru Youth Apparel at www.truyouthapparel.com.



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Ruffa
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A BEAUTY queen/actress/young mom, supported by a rich, loving husband gets visited by her family composed of five grown up brothers, her dad and her bling-obsessed mom. Cue movie trailer voice over.

The resulting plot is one week of over the-top reality that takes Benztown's most watched family and transports them to exotic Istanbul, complete with bodyguards, posh night clubs and tons and tons of gold. And on some special nights, a shower of cold cash (dollars—not lira, not pesos) is even involved!

After years of constant invitations from Ruffa Gutierrez Bektaş to visit her in different parts of the world, I finally made my way to Turkey, the land of divas and delights.

Upon arrival at the Istanbul airport, I was met by a bevy of men in dark suits. "Are you still blonde?" Ruffa, in her typical endearing sing-song voice, called me on the phone. Her Fashion TV bodyguards were looking for me. At that time, only one of them could speak English, and I didn't know any Turkish.

Gutierrez brood

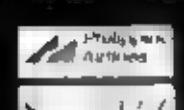
Ruffa's brothers Elvis, Rocky, Richard Raymond and RP (for Richie Paul) were excited because it was their first time to visit Turkey. I instantly became the sixth Gutierrez brother, since they became my Istanbul companions day in and day out.

I told the bodyguards that Richard, Raymond and I were triplets (not Shery, Tina and Manilyn) and that it just so happened that the two of them were identical, and I, the factory defect. They only discovered the truth when they asked me where my mother was, referring to Annabelle Ramal!



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RUFFAEZ





SHADES OF COOL. Richard Gutiérrez in Tom Ford eyewear



COME FLY WITH ME, says Rocky



LOVE BOAT. Eddie Gutierrez and Annabelle Rama in honeymoon



RANDI R. Ruffa and R. Gutiérrez on the Bosphorus



CAPTAIN Barbell takes a break

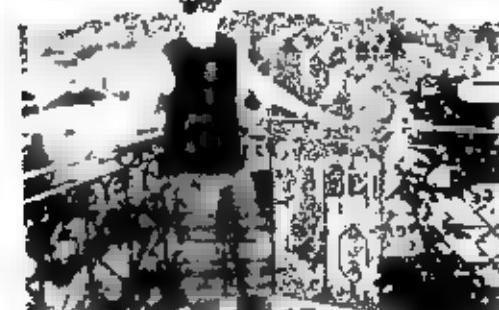


IT'S GETTIN' cold in here.

Ruffa DOTS FROM ASIA TO EUROPE BY NIEVE



SNAPSHOT of a princess



VIEW FROM THE TOP. Chard, as photographed by Mond



THE RUFFA TRIPLETS. From left: Sam, Sam, Sam



SHOWER PARTY. Sam, Sam, Sam



THE RUFFA'S TV SHOWERS. 24/7



RUFFA'S little angels. Lorin and Venice

Tim Yap

From page E1

should go get my Advil. My first day in Istanbul was spent at the Belkis house's mansion in the suburbs where Ruffa maintained her queendom in the presence of her family, household help and pets. It was also the bridal shower for Kesra, Ruffa's sis-in-law who was going to tie the knot that weekend. Ruffa, the consummate hostess kept on calling the twins to rush to her place (we stayed at a boutique hotel in Bebek, near the posh party spots in Istanbul) to catch the performance of the belly dancer she had hired for the party.

One soiree after another, I witnessed, in true pageant form, how Ruffa was able to transform and live up to every role she had to take—wife, mother, sister, daughter, hostess, guest relations officer, friend, etc. Many times she was busier than the party hosts themselves, and in family occasions, Yilmaz's kids seem to have grown so attached to her that they all really go to her—kids and adults alike are drawn to her like girls are to diamonds.

Bling it on!

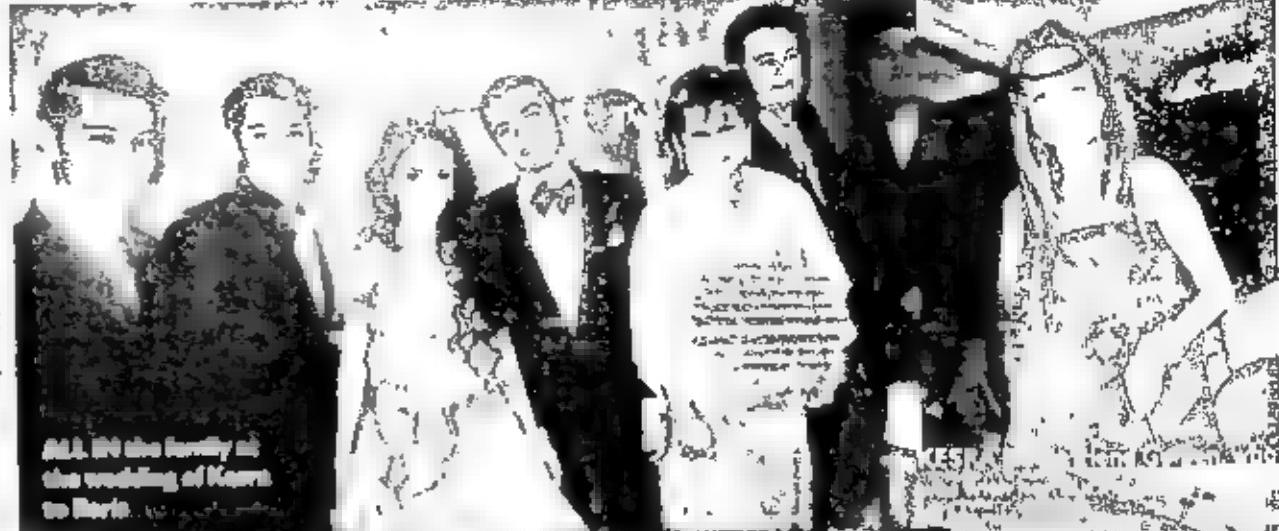
Speaking of this girl who is fond of diamonds, we went Superl shopping at The Grand Bazaar, where I experienced first hand the haggling skills of Mommy Annabelle. I watched with amazement as her kids point out a particular object they fancied and mommy Annabelle would argue and fight with the vendors until she got the item at the price she wanted. And then they became friends. Who can resist tita Annabelle?

"She just likes to haggle for the sake of hag-

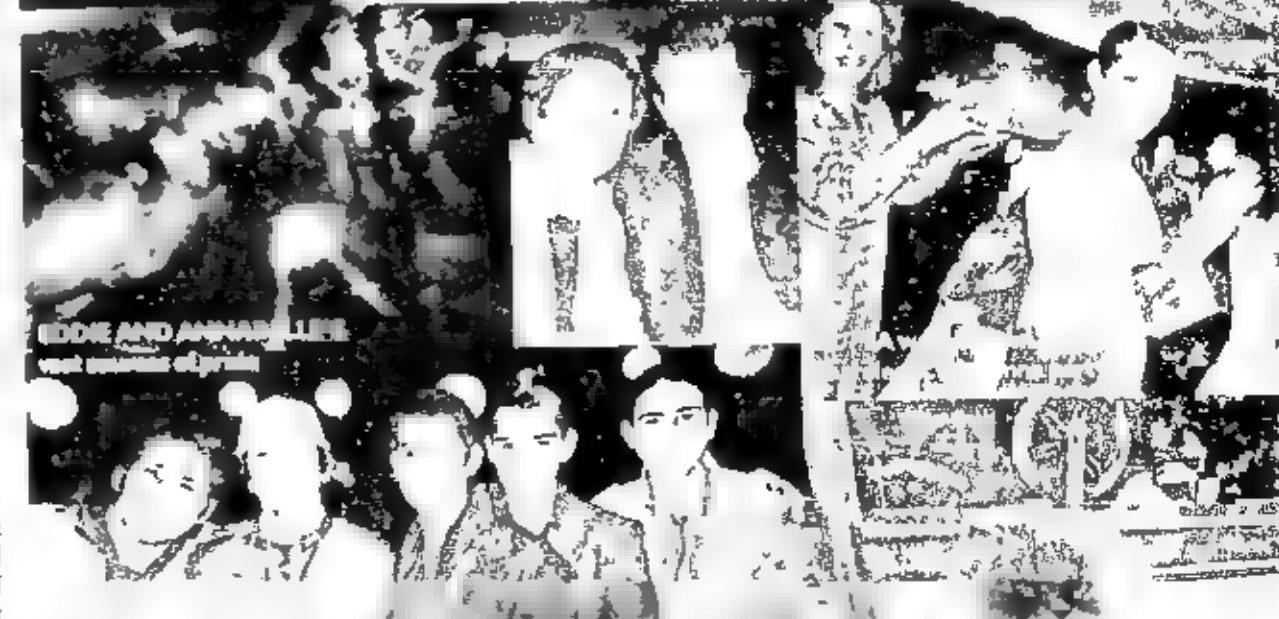
gle," Yilmaz said. "She's a double dragon," Yilmaz went wide-eyed as he lovingly described his mom-in-law. I'd say even a triple dragon, as even I felt well taken cared of, and safe, under tita Annabelle's wings.

Even in Istanbul, she brought cans and cans of pork n' beans, corned beef and other breakfast de luxe to make sure her boys have their favorite foods from good 'ol mom. "My boys are all so big now," she would wax sentimentally.

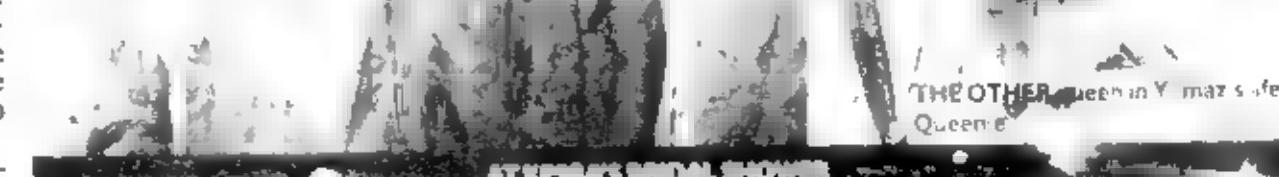
RUFFA/E1



ALL IN THE FAMILY at the wedding of Kavut to Nesra



EDDIE AND ANNABELLE RUMBLE ON BUSINESS OF LOVE



KESRA'S WEDDING



AT KESRA'S BRIDAL SHOWER



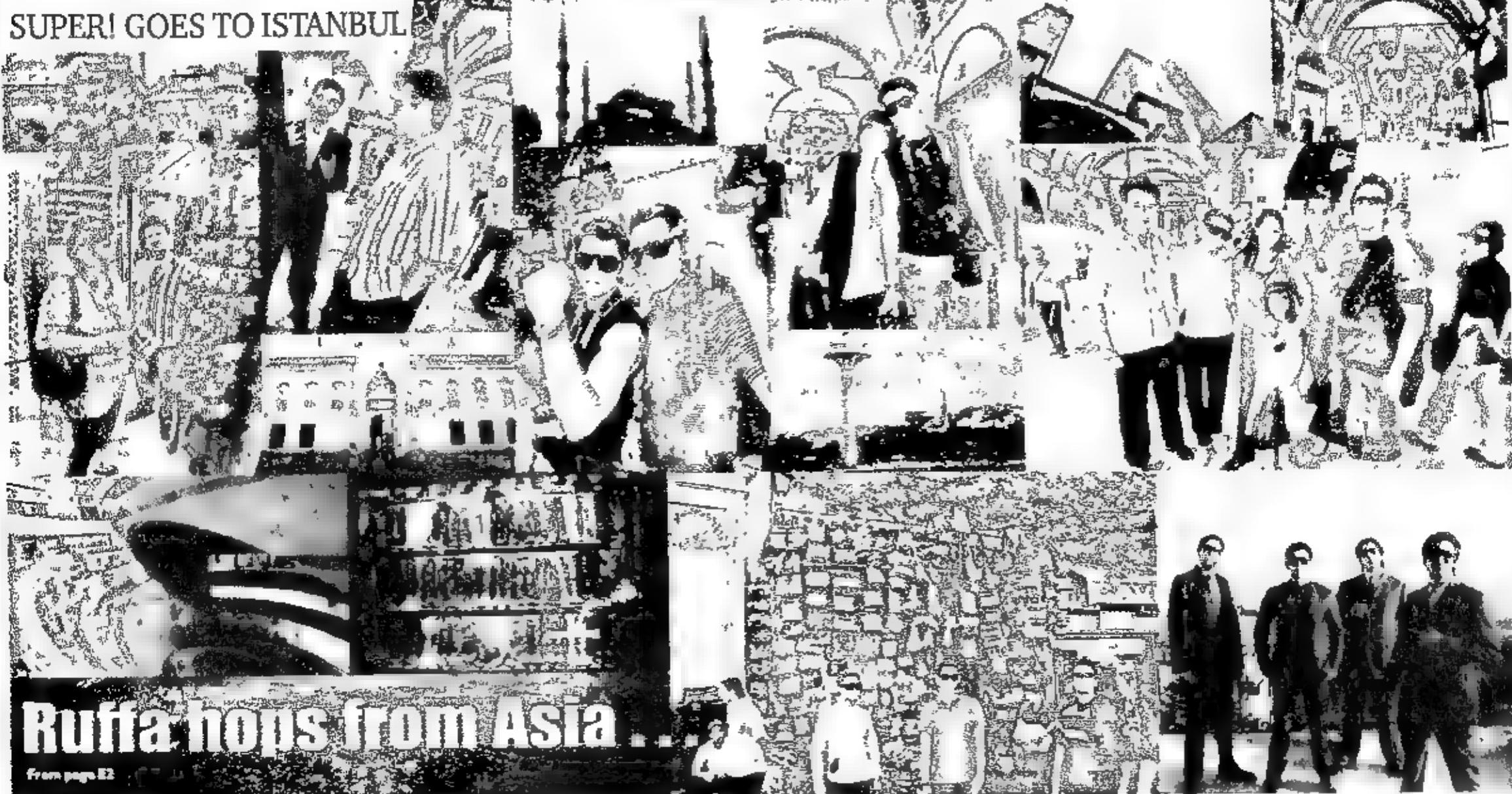
LIVE SAVING. Eddie and Randi Ruffa and Kesra

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2006

PHILIPPINE STAR

ED

SUPER! GOES TO ISTANBUL



Ruffa hops from Asia...

From page E2

ral in her Visayan-twanged Tagalog, smiling from ear to ear after pinching Elvis' cheek, or after giving Richard a tight embrace.

"Mummy, look at these diamonds!" Ruffa pointed to a super bling piece that can fully cover one's neck. "Marami naayo nyan!" Annabelle blurted out as she headed to the next stall. The next few days would take us all over Istanbul, bonding over traffic (our situation is much better than theirs, would you believe?) and body guards.

So real

A cruise along the Bosphorus sea took us from Asia to Europe and back. Istanbul is unique in such a way that half of it is located in Asia, and the other half, Europe. Ruffa crosses this line everyday, part of her daily chauffeur driven ride around town.

Being with Ruffa (who now speaks fluent Turkish, by the way), Yilmaz and the whole Gutierrez blood away from the glare of the Manila spotlight, I noticed first hand how this showbiz family is actually so grounded and so real. With them, what you see is what you get.

The Gutierrez boys form one big happy banya da—hanging out with them makes you feel like you're hanging out with your high school barkada. Elvis and Rocky are experts at impersonation, Raymond and Richie will love their music while Richard has his fixation for cars and Ducati bikes and has a great eye for photography. (Check out his photos within this Super! spread.) Seeing dad Eddie's quiet demeanor can remind you of your own cool dad. Being with Annabelle makes you feel like you're with your own quirky mom who mothers you with her love.

Being with Yilmaz, you sense a man truly in love with his wife and kids, and being with Ruffa... it's like being with your sister, if your sister was a princess.

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Playboy Mansion Satirist

By Katrina A. Holigors

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT any straight girl (who I doesn't have double D chest proportions) would be excited to attend an event that has "Playboy Mansion" as a theme. But, I kept trying to convince myself this was for work.

Before anyone even bothers to speculate if I possess aforementioned mammalian attributes let me clarify that work meant being head of content for Fashion TV Philippines and that we were invited to cover an event. Indochine Restaurant, located on Orchard Road in Singapore was about to stage a charity dinner plus fashion show with designer Farah Angsana and all proceeds were going to the Action for AIDS Charity. Two of my colleagues and I set off for the land of the "las" with equipment and no real expectations in tow. I have always wondered what kind of gimmicks one was willing to throw or get into in the name of "charity." I guess when times get hard, getting charity is even harder.

Efficient energy

Singapore was as expected bustling with the most efficient energy known to man. Everything there just works and everyone just seems to be so reliable and honest. It seemed, with everything so streamlined and well disciplined, that an event sounding in nature supporting a rather controversial subject matter could be pulled off with aplomb. Half-asleep and fuelled by pure adrenaline (thanks to chocolate), we set off for the venue to give a visual oscar.

Beautiful models

Christina Mitropoulou, our FTV Singapore sister, had already been given a heads up of what to do when met with three visitors from the Philippines—feed them and feed them fast! Over roast duck with rice at a local kopitiam, we discussed the schedule and parameters for the evening ahead. Again looking over what was to be expected in the name of charity, beautiful models in beautiful gowns, high society guests, celebrities, a five-course dinner, and er, an under-dressed code I felt rather uncomfortable and I couldn't figure out why. Maybe I was still rather old-fashioned in this modern day. Although I thought charities would be more subdued "with clothes" affairs, I was prepared to stay professional and cover the event regardless.

of my impressions and expectations

What started out as work though turned out to be a lot quite a fun experience. First of all, the venue itself was very unique in its appearance, formal-looking settings, chandeliers in the middle of very long tables gave it an almost kitschy feel, I mean, the whole club was beginning to imbibe a rather S&M feel. This was coupled by the red carpet walk where guests either clad in Farah Angsana's wares or...underwear wares were welcomed by half-naked men in masks. I guess for

the guests (and the FTV Crew) the whole setting was taken in a tongue-in-cheek manner, even some of the more scantly clad of the guests were not taking themselves and their body parts too seriously. From pre-event, during dinner, through the fashion show and even at the after party it became more and more evident that everyone involved was having a gleefully good time. Playmates, playboys and play wannabes were scattered all over the club and restaurant, but there was a strict "no photo" clause on many of the guests that was (maybe cause it

was Singapore) readily and seriously abided. (Brangelina and baby would have been better off in Indochine rather than Namibia).

Highly amusing

Although the overall scene was highly amusing, what was most enjoyable for me was bumping into an old friend, Mike Wiluan (who I had not seen in over 10 years) and making new friends amidst the noise and the nakedness. Some of the guests got pretty raunchy towards the end of the night but FTV kept its promise and we kept ours cam-

eras off, although our eyes were pretty much popping out of our heads. Champagne flowed, dancing was all night and several awards were given out that night, from a \$3,000 gown from Farah to several Valentino leather bags. People took their partying very seriously and a new definition of the word "Playmate" emerged that very night.

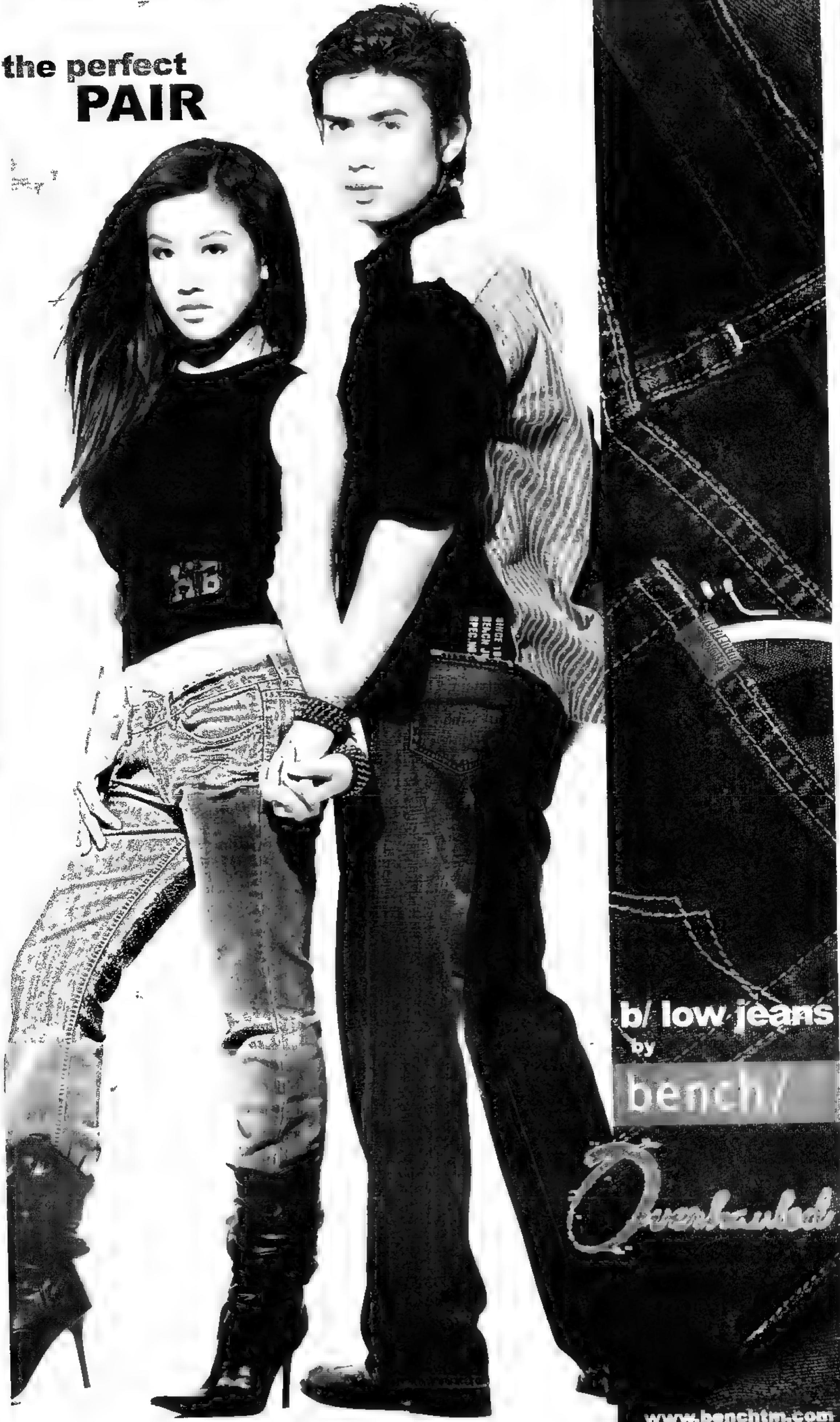
But still, I thought I would be put off by all the debauchery around me and was pleasantly surprised that despite still having all my clothes on I was still very much welcomed into the fray.

Rumor has it that the event raised double of what was estimated for Action for AIDS and the colorful condom giveaways disappeared way before the clothes on the guests did.

I don't think I could have planned out something more successful and I humbly whip my rather self-righteous non-bunny tailed behind into submission. Whatever works for charitable causes works for me. In these unpredictable times, charity has to get creative. So maybe next time I won't scoff at the idea of being a Playmate for a good cause.



the perfect
PAIR

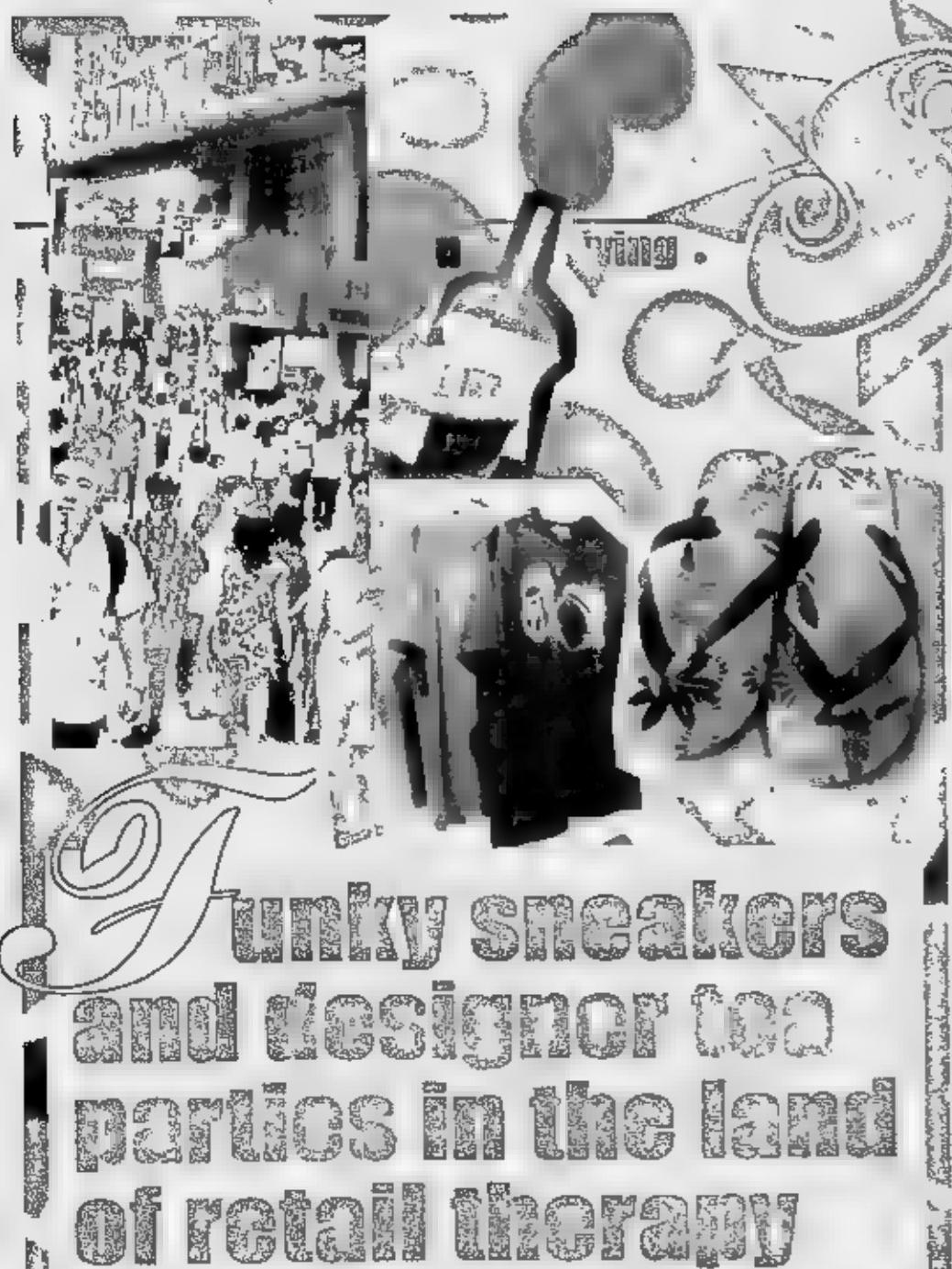


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Funky sneakers and designer tea parties in the land of retail therapy

This is a Hong Kong shopping adventure without a lot of shopping

Text and photos by Pam Pastor

HONG KONG IS THE cure for the jaded shopper's soul. Just when you think you know its ins and outs, the land of retail therapy reaches into its vault and hurls surprises along your way.

This I discovered during a recent big family trip to Hong Kong, courtesy of my generous grandfather. There were 17 of us—which is pretty crazy. While they invaded Disneyland, the Hong Kong Tourism Board swept me away on the Airport Express train and introduced me

FUNKY/F2



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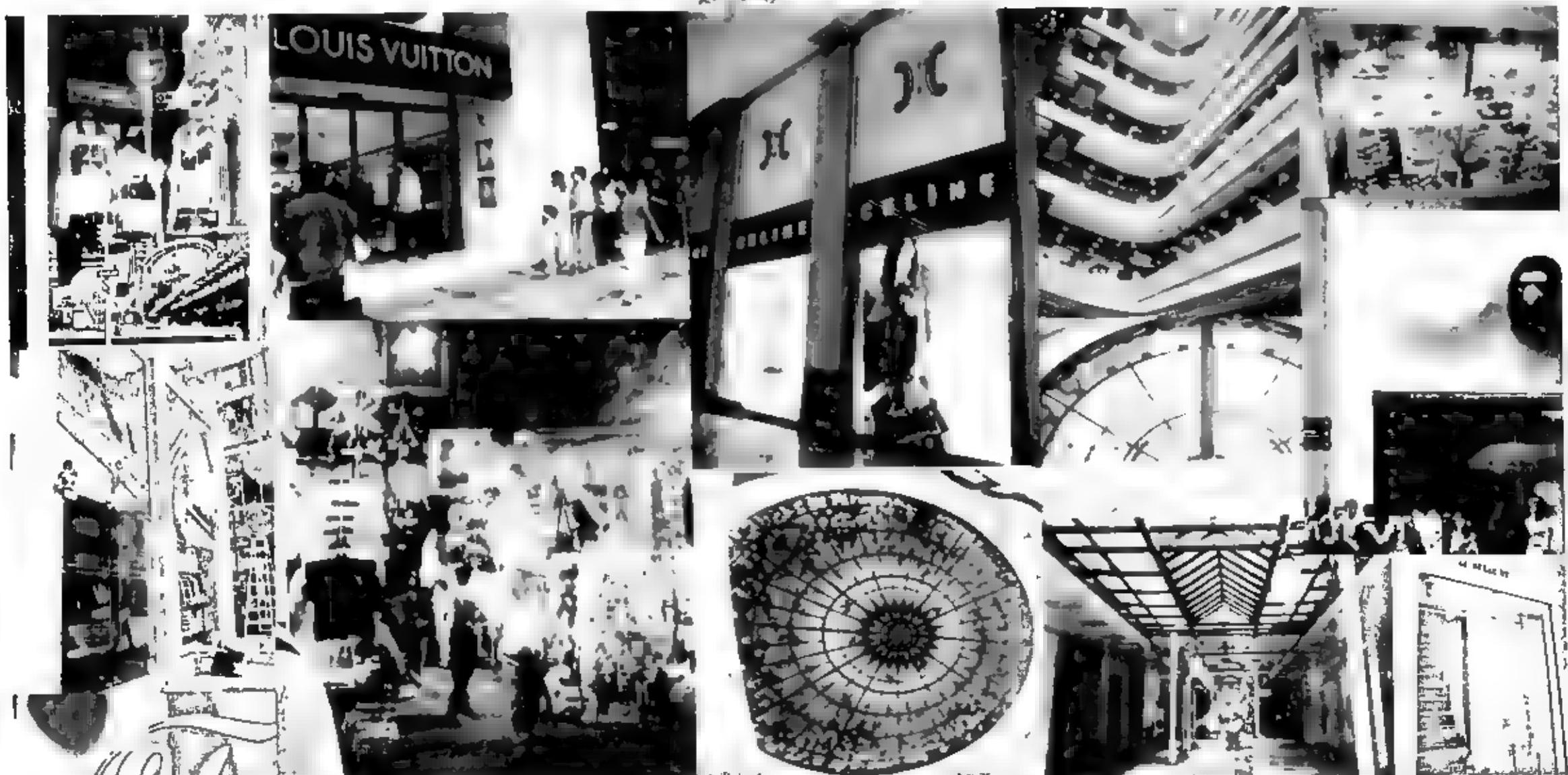
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FUNKY SNEAKERS AND BLACK HAWAIIANAS in the land of retail therapy

From page F1

to a magical world where funky sneakers float by on conveyor belts under see-through floors, where rich ladies go for designer tea parties, where queues of people ready to splurge on fashion go around the block and where tour guides have an affinity for all things yellow.

And I thought I knew shopping like I know the colors of my nail polish collection.

But my shopping adventure actually started the day before Denny, my tour guide, fetched me from my hotel. While the kids went to Toys R Us and the adults returned to their rooms to rest, I took the bus to Tung Chung and then a long MTR ride which had me switching trains. I had a mission—to pick up two pairs of Japanese-designed Chico Havaianas that Fedder Red was holding for me. That trip was almost uneventful—except that on the way back, I got on the wrong train because I didn't realize that Choi Wan and Wan Chai were two different places. That was fun.

The next day was even more fun—full of eye candy, surprises, good food, train rides, long walks and even suspense.

The Big Brands

Our first few stops were Meccas of luxury shopping at Central and Causeway Bay. Denny told me about a funny trend in Hong Kong now—big brand shops have little coffee shops and a lot of rich ladies hang out there for tea. Designer tea parties, that's what I'd like to call them. We saw Joyce, Alexandra House, Giorgio Armani, Louis Vuitton, Gucci and Harvey Nichols where Denny got attached to a bright yellow wallet.

It was the first of the numerous bright yellows that lit up that day.

I didn't think I would find anything of interest in those stores—after all, I am an okay girl and a big bargain hunter. Luxury shopping and my bank account don't mix. That is, until we went to the The Landmark and we stopped by the Celine boutique and I saw the limited edition Celine havaianas.

Not ready to splurge that early in the morning, I asked Denny, "Will we still see a Celine boutique after we go to Harbour City?"

He said, "Let me put it this way—we will be seeing Celine boutiques before, during and after we go to Harbour City."

Ah, Hong Kong. You've got to love it.

Queue, r, s, t, u, v

One thing I've noticed about Hong Kong is you don't know where one shopping building ends and another starts. Denny said that there's really a conscious effort to connect malls and buildings for the convenience of the people, so they don't have to walk outside if it's raining or if the sun is too hot. It didn't matter if the buildings were owned by different people, they cooperated to make things better for consumers. I thought that was a remarkable thing.

Denny was very excited about our next stop. But when we reached A Bathing Ape, the door was closed and there was a long line of people outside. Young people, old people, funky-looking people, serious-looking people. They were all waiting to go inside Bathing Ape.

"Why?" I asked Denny. He didn't know either. There must be a huge sale going on, I thought. But I couldn't believe people would line up that early for a sale—it was only 10 in the morning.

Deciding to go back when the queue was gone, we went to our next stop. Tulip (16 On Lan Street), which looks like a big girl's dollhouse, sells floaty dresses, quirky

On your marks, get set, swing!

THE BIG SWING This year's Hong Kong Shopper of the Year contest (now with 20 participating teams from different countries) and the Grand Lucky Draw which would give away 113 prizes worth HK\$2.7 million. The grand prize is an Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Offshore watch valued at HK\$120,000.

For more information, visit www.ds.com.hk.

clothes, vintage accessories and shabby chic pieces from Europe. The place felt magical—it was perfect for a photo shoot.

Break for lunch

Island Beverly (No. 1 Great George Street, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong) was our next stop. Strangely, a lot of them were still closed even if it was noon. As we went around the building, Denny said there was an interesting story behind the stores and he promised to share it with me during lunch.

Over deep-fried oysters, barbecued pork buns, Vietnamese-style shrimp rice rolls, sao jiong bun, pan-fried scallop cakes and shrimp dumplings at Superscar Seafood restaurant, Denny told me about the rise of youth malls in Hong Kong.

"We have a lot of young people who studied design. They don't want to work in an office and they think they know what young people want so many of them put up their own stores," he said. The stores are tiny—most of them just 30 to 40 square feet—but they make the most out of the space. The stores can be found in Island Beverly and in another building called Rise, which we would see later in the day.

The stores didn't become popular overnight but word spread, thanks to assistants who shopped there and then passed on the good news to the celebrities they work for.

Denny said that the store hours were strange because they depended on the owners' body clocks. "Young people go to parties at night and they wake up late. That's why the stores open late too."

What a fun way to make a living.

Late-night shopping

Thanks to APM, one of Hong Kong's newer shopping malls, I can proudly say that I rode all the lines of the MTR during my trip.

Located in the center of Kwun Tong, APM (Millennium City 5, 418 Kwun Tong Road, Kowloon) has been called the "pioneer of late-night shopping." I wonder what the vendors of the Ladies Market have to say about that.

Offering floor after floor of interesting stores, Kwun Tong stays open until about 2 a.m. And you'll probably need to stay until then to explore every little find in its numerous corners. One memorable store was MUJI (which literally means "no brand"), a Japanese-owned store that sells good quality items with no brand names. People were going crazy over their notebooks and gel pens. And yeah, I morphed into one of them.

There was a store called Princess, which sold only pink, furry and girly things and a

store called 2% that featured a lot of fun collectibles including Astroboy and On Dog and Friends items. Other interesting stores include D-mop and extravaganza.

"Happy Everyday," that's the tagline of APM. And why shouldn't shoppers be?

Mickey everywhere

I may have skipped Disneyland but Mickey still managed to find me. Cool store I.T. offered mouse merchandise with an extra dose of fashion.

Cantonyama at Tsim Sha Tsui (80 Canton Road) was another interesting stop with many stories packed with fashion pieces and knick knacks.

On our way to Rise Commercial Centre, we passed by another Louis Vuitton store and saw another long queue. It was both amusing and intriguing to see people so hell-bent on fashion that they'd line up for a long time under the heat of the sun to get close to expensive bags.

Rise (5-11 Granville Circuit, Tsim Sha Tsui) turned out to be awesome, even a little freaky. It was as if they searched the deepest corners of my heart for clothes I've dreamt of and put them together in one crazy building. Big dramatic tops, flowy blouses, rockin' shoes—felt like I was in Willy Wonka's factory, if he made clothes instead of cavity-makers.

A Bathing Ape, finally

We finally made it inside A Bathing Ape. It did not disappoint. I finally remembered why the brand seemed so familiar—I had read about it in Time magazine. A Bathing Ape is a popular brand in Japan that has been called "the gold standard in cool." The store was different alright, good different—the patterned floors, racks of funky shelves, bright lights, shelves and shelves of really colorful shoes and sneakers on conveyor belts moving beneath our feet.

Denny asked the guy at the door why there was a queue earlier. There was no big sale, oh no. People were lining up because new stocks had arrived. Now that's a real passion for fashion.

A mad sprint

The shopping tour ended with a mad sprint from Kowloon to Hong Kong side because there was only one pair of Celine Havaianas left in my size and it was at Central, at the first Celine boutique we visited.

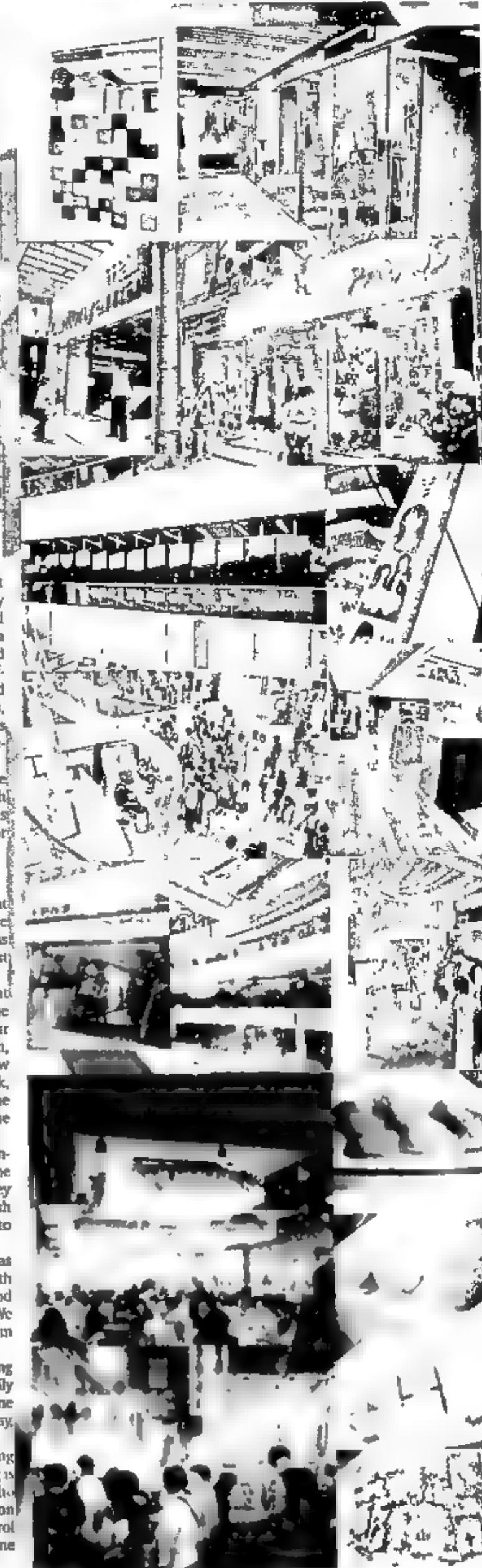
My feet were already killing me by that time and my heart pounded as we walked the long walk to the station. What if the last pair was gone? I thought. When it started to rain, Denny decided to have a little fun. "Now someone will get her feet wet and she'll think, I should buy new sandals. She'd walk into the store and buy the last pair of 37/38 Celine sandals..."

But no, I beat the other (imaginary) rain-soaked Havaianas-chasing women. The saleswomen smiled in amusement when they saw me. It was as if they knew I would rush back. I made it, with just a few minutes to spare before closing time.

Soon, our legs and feet were able to rest as we dined on roast goose, roast pork, beef with oyster sauce and deep-fried seaweed and shrimp paste roll at Yung Kee Restaurant. We ended the night with ice cream cones from Ben and Jerry's.

But it was only day two of our Hong Kong trip. I spent the next three days with my family eating and raiding the usual haunts—Lane Crawford, Toys R Us, HMV, Sasa, Causeway Bay, Tsim Sha Tsui, Ladies Market, Sham Shui Po.

Whether your thrill lies in luxury shopping or bargain-hunting, shopping in Hong Kong is always an adventure. It doesn't matter who you're with either. And whether you siphon your bank account dry or manage to control your spending, you will always come home loaded with stories to tell.





Fast, furious and stylin'

FOR TWO INCREDIBLE DAYS AND nights, a record number of participants and attendees turned the World Trade Center in Roxas Boulevard into a pit stop like no other. Styling Extreme 2006 lived up to its billing as the biggest and most prestigious convergence of car enthusiasts in the country.

Present were Heart Evangelista, Marc Nelson, Marlon Fernandez, Rico Robles, Raymond Gutierrez, Bubbles Paraso, Bianca Valerio, Devaughn, Brent Javier, Rich Herrera, Champ Ian-Pio of Hale and Xander Angeles.

There was a break-dancing competition that was judged by world-famous break-dancing champion and choreographer, BBoy Crumbs. The DJs that brought the house down were Manolet Dario, JJ Flores, Miss Lisa, GP Reyes, Mars Miranda and Invisibl Skratch Pkz featuring DJ Ober, Shorkun and Yogafrog. The real highlight of the two-day event was the Car Show proper where over \$5,000 in cash prizes were up for grabs. Judged by RJ De Vera and LJ Garcia, legendary figures in the car-tuning scene, a dazzling display of well-pumped rides competed for 12 excit-

ing categories.

Dennis Go's beautifully-modified 1995 Honda Civic bagged the Best in Show award and the \$1,000 prize. Best SUV/Truck honors went to the awesome Ford 180 of Johnny Chua. Irwin Dizon's Chevy Impala won Best Lowrider. Gerald Hidalgo's 1996 Honda Civic actually won both in the Best Paint and Best Graphics category while Alec Ong's 2005 Honda Jazz also won two awards—Best Multimedia and Best Audio Install. Other awards were won by ERS for Best Team, Atoy Body Shop for Best Team Repre-

sentation while Import Hook-Ups of a Honda S2000 and Toyota Altezza of Philson Co and Keith Bryan Ham took home the SX Choice Award. Other category winners are: Nissan Open—Vi Pena (Nissan 350Z), Mitsubishi Open—Alvin Gan (Evo8), Toyota Open—Ruchie Wee (Toyota Camry), Japanese Open—Ronald Nazal (Subaru STI WRC), American Open—Elmer Parrenas (Ford Lynx 2001 series), European Open—Allen Dizon (Audi TT), Korean Open—Lyman Chua (Hyundai Getz), Dub Open—Tony Pineda (Ford Expedition).

RJ De Vera, a consultant for the movie "The Fast And The Furious" was impressed with the car show entries. "A good number of them will definitely do well in car shows in the States," he said. "My advice to those who want to build their own cars and seriously pursue this career is that you have to give it time and you got to love what you do."

More than anything else, you have to do it for yourself."

Start revving up your engines for next year's tour. It's going to be another thrilling ride.

Fashion

From page F4

1940s Varga girls with bright lips and eyeliner. "She was literally born under a lucky star and everything she does is just perfect and gorgeous," Greene describes. "She knows the right makeup, the right hair, the right outfit—everything comes to her very easily."

Greene also found the task of making Lohan's eyes "visible but hidden" a challenge. "We wanted to see her and not see her; make it gorgeous and beautiful but also make it a masquerade," Greene says. The final look chosen for the masquerade ball is Italian-themed, inspired by traditional Venetian masks. Greene used Swarovski crystals and swirls of gold traced around Ashley's eyes. "The look starts out flawless," Greene says. "But when she loses her luck, everything becomes smoky. We see a physical transformation which helps to sell the idea that her luck has really gone sour."

The newly-unlucky Ashley wears a hodge-podge of clothes that reflect her unfortunate turn of events. "She starts borrowing clothes from other people, which puts her in a lot of color and a lot of different kinds of clothing that she would never have worn as Ashley, the successful and lucky young woman," says Jones. "Her 'borrowed look' is a mush-mash of sorts and takes her into a palette of bright colors, casual clothing and jeans. Her hair and makeup become clean and simple, with a natural prettiness showing through."

Ashley's look hits rock bottom as she gets doused with real mud. Greene put in a bid to help Lohan through it by offering up face mask mud instead of real mud, but Lohan refused. "I was like, fine, let me just do it," she says, laughing.

Andy on the Runway

Anne Hathaway plays Andy Sachs who just got off college in the fashion-forward comedy "The Devil Wears Prada" opposite Meryl Streep. As Andy steps into the dizzying world of New York fashion, where Runway Magazine is considered the Holy Grail, it dawns on her that being Miranda's (Streep) assistant will take more than drive and determination.

To become the perfect assistant, Andy will need to make herself over in Miranda's image. Soon, much to her boyfriend's (Adrian Grenier) dismay, she can talk the talk, walk the walk flawlessly and never again confuse Dolce with Gabbana. But the more life she sees through Miranda's eyes, the more she begins to grasp that Miranda's world is a fabulous but a terribly lonely one—and that sometimes great success depends on great sacrifice.

Anne Hathaway, the breakout star of "The Princess Diaries," and who had a key role in "Brokeback Mountain," portrays Andy, a journalism student who believes she can change the world after leaving the comforts of Northwestern University and landing in the big city.

Andy, says (director) David Frankel, "is on a journey that we all take when we get our first job and discover what the real world is like. We're faced with ethical and moral choices that we never considered, and we learn about ourselves." Hathaway adds, "If you're over age 21, you've probably had some of Andy's experiences."

In the distorted aesthetics of the New York fashion scene, a size 6 like Andy stands out. "She is a beautiful girl who is not model-thin, which is an important distinction for this character," says Frankel. Hathaway embodied Andy with grace and humor. "Anne is funny and will do things in a way that not a lot of actors could do," Fineman adds, "and every time she does so, it is fresh and new. She finds the funny and never holds back."

Andy's first moments with Miranda are a soul-crushing disaster. Judged simply by her cotton blend sweater and shapeless skirt, Andy is dismissed with a wave of Miranda's hand. But Andy doesn't take no for answer. She may not be the best-dressed girl in the room, but she's smart and she'll work hard. This makes an impression on a woman to whom no one dares even ask a question, let alone contradict.

Dressed in drab or face full of mud, Anne Hathaway and Lindsay Lohan pull it off in the most drop-dead gorgeous fashion in "Just My Luck" and "The Devil Wears Prada," soon to open in Philippine cinemas from 20th Century Fox to be distributed by Warner Bros.,

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ANDY slowly morphs into Miranda.



LINDSAY Lohan as Ashley Albright



DROP-DEAD GORGEOUS TRENDSETTERS Lindsay Lohan and Anne Hathaway hit a cool and chic in the workplace as they blend their own style sensibilities in the upcoming fashion comedies "Just My Luck" and "The Devil Wears Prada."

"Just My Luck" is the story of Ashley Albright (Lindsay Lohan), the luckiest woman in the world, a person to whom all the good things in life have come far too easily.

Lucky Ashley

She can pick a lottery ticket at random and hit the jackpot. In New York, the world's busiest city, Ashley never has to wait for a cab. And she has a terrific job as an account executive at a prestigious public relations firm. Everything goes Ashley's way. She was never prepared for her luck to run out during a masquerade ball when she got together with Jake (Chris Pine) on the dance floor. At that moment, their luck switched and Ashley's world turns upside down.

Lohan, a fashion enthusiast, relished the opportunity to bring her sensibilities to Ashley's wardrobe. At the film's start, Ashley's "lucky look" is quickly established. "She is this pristine, dressed-in-white, almost impermeable person who can walk through the streets of New York and never get a drop of anything on her," says Jones. "She wears a white Versace cashmere coat in the opening shots of the movie. Underneath is a sheer top in a creamy white color with gold threads and a great silk charmeuse skirt. Very pale, high-heeled Valentino boots, a pale Valentino purse and a white cashmere pashmina complete the look. She starts out in white and in shades of white and continues that way until she loses her luck."

To create that pristine, untouchable sparkle, makeup artist Kimberly Greene patterned Ashley's masquerade makeup after the

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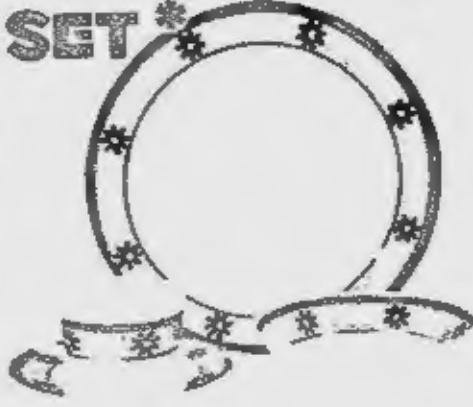
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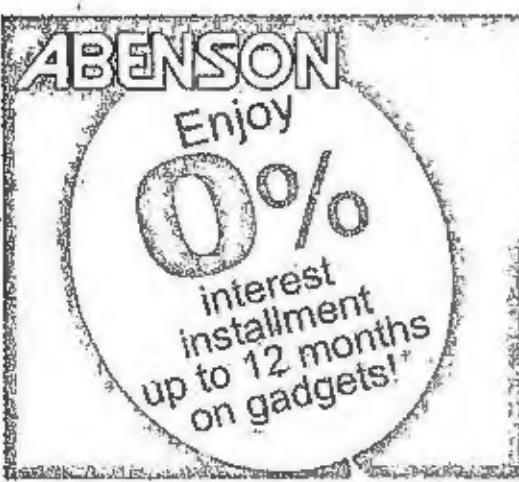
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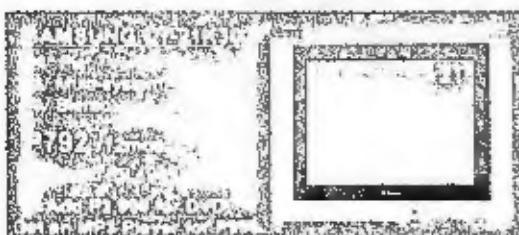
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July 1	3pm	Eastwood, Uts	3pm	Saturday	5:00-7:30 pm
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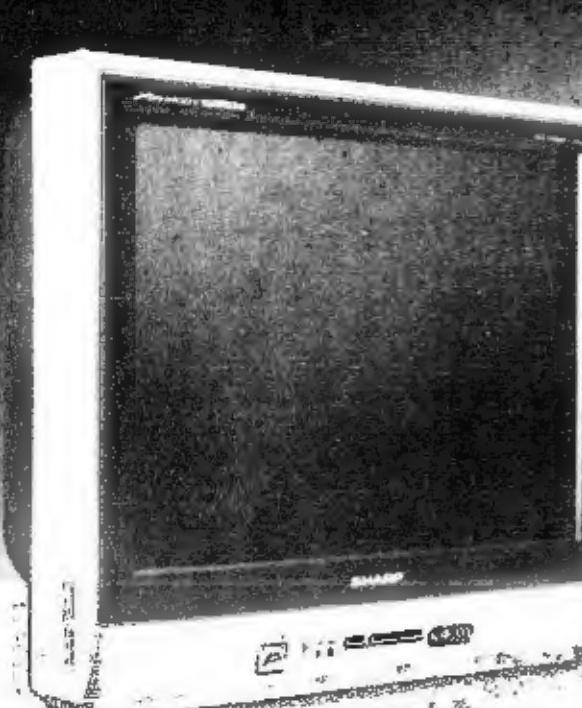
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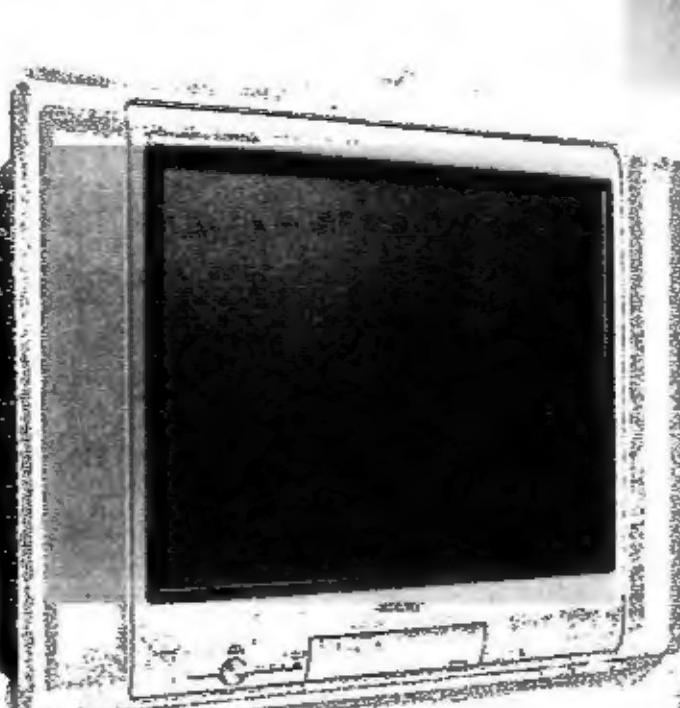
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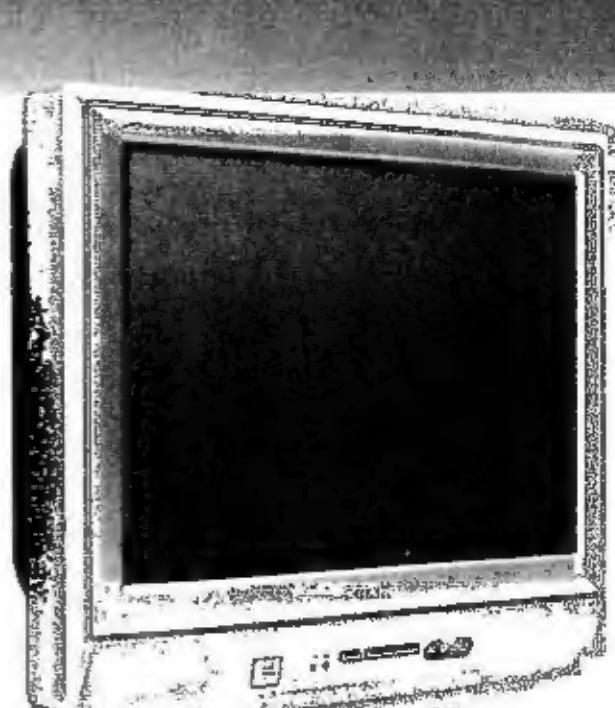
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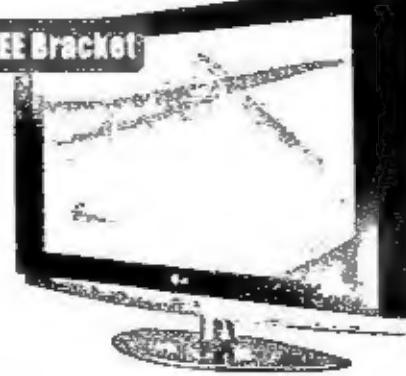
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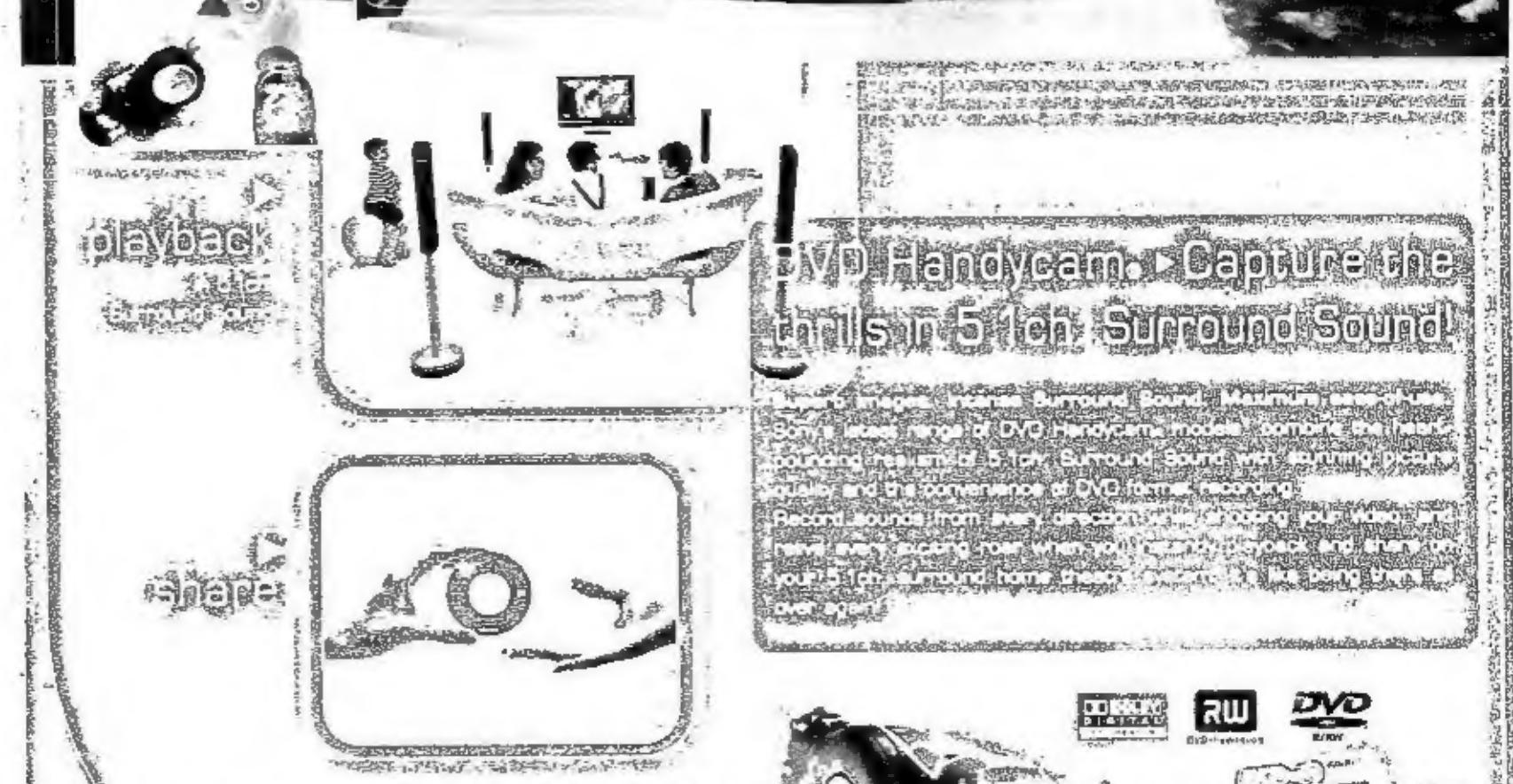
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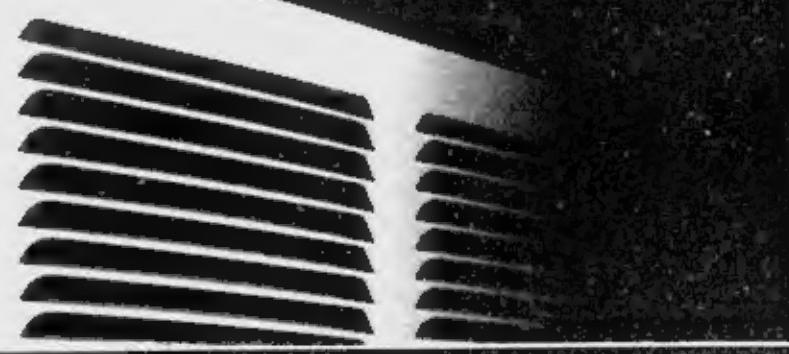
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Jaka	812-2802/1684
829-2588/87	Metropoint
Las Piñas	833-7865/7829/8196
872-0576/77	Missouri
Lipa	722-1284/4187
(043) 404-1581	721-0590
753-3142	Pearl Plaza
Lucana	851-8401/03
(042) 373-0443/68	Quad
Mataion	818-8453/819-5663
287-0478/0344/9932	Riverbanks
Metropolis	941-5003/6191/5180
809-8174/8821	San Pablo
Pasig	(049) 562-8242
666-8843/47	Showroom
Pieridel	831-5188
(044) 795-3271	Rin Road
Quzon City	(046) 534-4888/4818
724-2670/2501/2551	SM City
Rosario	820-9161/63
(046) 438-5457	927-8518/8508
Rustans	Tarlac
911-2313/3484/2375	(045) 985-1278/1253
Shangrila	The Fort
638-8017/16/19/49/80	886-820/8491/92
St. Francis	R-AB Angeles
633-1362/84	(046) 825-8466
Tayuman	Valenzuela
252-5707/98/88	277-8539/38/39

HANDWASHED CLEAN DONE HANDS-FREE



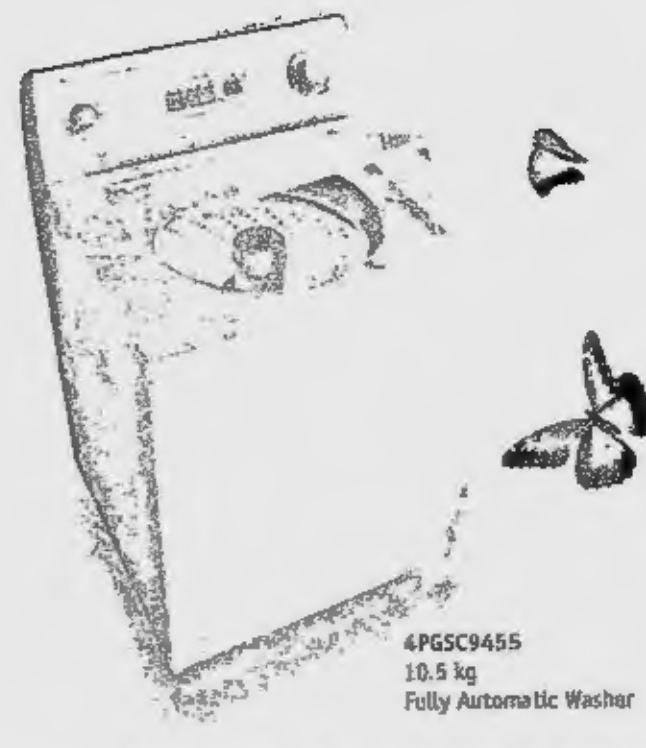
Xtra Roll Action Agitator
Ensures roll over of
clothes for a cleaner,
whiter wash.



Bobrack Function
Guarantees the removal of
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built-in heater.



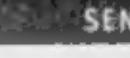
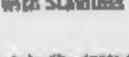
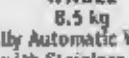
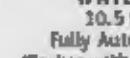
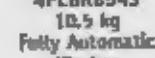
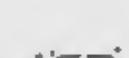
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Can accommodate huge
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the toughest of stains in the most delicate of fabrics,
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